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December

2006

DIRTBIKE
RIDER



COMMENT

WELL, THAT'S just about yer lot for another year! The world trials, enduro and motocross championships are done and dusted, the Sheffield SX has been and gone and the Weston Beach Race – the traditional end-of-season painfest that on a masochistic scale of one to 10 is right up there with stapling your hairy boys to a park bench (and then jumping up) – is history for another 12 months. In fact, apart from the ISDE that's about to kick off, the awesome Belfast SX later this month, the new outdoor SX series at Kings Lynn and a couple of indoor enduros the '06 season is over.

One man who should be looking to put his size 13s up for a well-earned rest is David Knight. I say 'should' instead of 'will' because Knighter doesn't know the meaning of the word 'rest' – unless it's in the context of "the 'rest' of them finished behind me". In a season where both Stefan Everts and Ricky Carmichael have called time on their stellar careers it's almost all too easy to overlook the Manx man mountain's phenomenal season that's been built around huge natural talent and an incredible enthusiasm for all things two-wheeled combined with a work ethic that puts professional athletes in all sporting disciplines to shame.

Unbeaten in all the pre-season events and unbeaten in the WEC, Knighter appeared to be facing his biggest test of the year at Weston where he was lining up against the world's best sand rider – yup, Everts. After winning all but one MX1 GP overall this year, topping the MXdN, taking his 10th world title and his 101st GP overall, Stefan was also on a bit of a roll. On paper it was a fascinating showdown. Although super-fit and super-fast, Everts is an MX specialist. So could he maintain his speed over three hours? Also super-fit (and also bloody fast), Knighter is used to spending a full day in the saddle but could he maintain a pace quick enough to beat the King of GPMX? Well, after an epic race-long battle the decision went David's way which, in my book at least, makes him the best all-round off-road rider on the planet.

So Knighter should be an automatic shoe-in at the ISDE in New Zealand – right? Er, wrong! Last year's overall winner of the event and an automatic pick for the '06 British Trophy Team, what on earth could possibly stop him coming out on top in Lake Taupo? A freak crash? Mechanical failure? How about his decision not to race! With the ISDE looming large it's inevitable that David's no-show will put him in the firing line for not supporting his country and not supporting his chosen sport's equivalent of the Motocross des Nations. The truth is – as Jonty Edmunds pointed out a few months ago – despite support from the ACU, travelling to the other side of the world to race for six days would end up costing – yes, costing – Knighter a big lump of the cash he's worked his arse off all year to earn.

So instead of spending his own dosh to race in NZ he'll be rolling up to the startgate at Las Vegas where – if he repeats his '05 winning performance – he stands to pick up mega bucks for a day's work. And who can blame him?

Face like a smacked arse!



Sean



© Surty

Mike Brown's gonna be back in Belfast

BELFAST ON THE BOX!

Odyssey SX gets Channel 4 coverage

IN TERMS of European indoor competition it's the Johnny-come-lately of supercross but the Belfast SX is fast growing in stature to rival even Paris Bercy.

We take it for granted that the event always attracts a stellar entry list so the big news this year is that the Belfast Supercross will be featured in a special half-hour Channel 4 television programme to be broadcast some time early in the New Year.

"The deal I've done is with Boomerang TV – they're the people who produce all the programmes for Freeports on Four for Channel 4," explains Events 22 boss Matt Bates. "Belfast will be part of the series and we'll definitely have a half-hour programme within that series.

"I'm delighted with the deal – it will bring supercross and, hopefully through a knock-on effect, motocross to a much wider audience. I'm trying to get supercross back to where it was four or five years ago when we were getting it out to a mainstream audience.

"The programme won't be just a straight race-by-race thing. We're trying to re-educate and re-introduce people to supercross so it'll be more of a magazine-style programme with a look at the lifestyle of the riders and some behind the scenes footage."

This year's two-nighter at the Northern Irish capital's Odyssey Arena – the sixth on the trot – sees twice runner-up Mike Brown returning to headline the event on his debut for CAS Honda.

"The Belfast Supercross is a great race for me to come back to and I'm looking forward to returning to the Odyssey in front of the Northern Irish fans – it's a great venue and a great city. For the past two years I've been runner-up to Tortelli and Roy but this year I'm hoping to lift the title and start my UK return as I mean to go on."

With the exception of '05 winner Sebastian Tortelli, every previous King of Belfast will be racing – that's Gordon Crockard ('01 and '03), Jeff Dement ('02) and Jean Sebastian Roy ('04). They'll be joined by international hotshots including Erick Vallejo, Jay Marmont and Jacob Saylor and British stars including Billy MacKenzie, Carl Nunn and Brad Anderson.

Another rider making his world debut on a new team is fresh KTM signing Tommy Searle who can't wait to race his full-factory 250F.

"I've had such a great year with the Molson Kawasaki team but now I'm really focussed on achieving my goals with KTM. I took a break after the des Nations but now I'm hard at it training for the supercross in Belfast – it's such a mega weekend."

Full details at www.belfastsupercross.com or turn to pages 42-43 of this month's DBR.

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ride MX FACTOR

DOUBLE BUBBLE!

Ride MX Factor expands for 2007

AFTER THE tremendous success of the 2006 search for an up-and-coming youth racer with the Ride MX Factor the competition has been expanded for '07 to find not one but two super-promising youngsters.

The full sponsorship packages haven't been finalised yet but they will include the loan of a fully-tuned Yamaha, monthly bike maintenance in the Ride MX workshops, set-up and tuning advice, Michelin tyres, Putoline oils and rider instruction from Robbie Herring. On top of all this the winners will receive clothing and safety equipment from

Lazer helmets, Shift racewear, Fox goggles and Berik boots plus more to be announced.

Paul Wood, boss of the Stratford-upon-Avon dealers, explains. "This year we thought the competition was a great success and the winner Drew Goudy has produced some great results. It's all worked well so we want to up it a bit more and put something extra back into the sport.

"All our existing Ride MX Factor sponsors are back onboard for '07 and we're delighted to have Rob Herring's services both as a judge and as an instructor for the two winners throughout the season."

So how do you enter? It's dead simple! If you're aged between 11 and 18 and a regular racer we

want to hear from you. Send in a full portfolio detailing your racing history, current bike, existing sponsors, long-term goals, outside interests and anything else you think we'll be interested in. Just no porkies please – we'll find out if you're lying!

All portfolios will be scrutinised by our expert panel of judges including Paul Wood and Robbie Herring. A short-list of 20 riders will then be invited to a Midlands track where the two racers with the Ride MX Factor will be chosen.

Portfolios should be sent to 'Ride MX Factor', Ride MX, Unit 13 Western Road Industrial Estate, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 0AH. Closing date for entries is December 31.

More info at www.ridemxfactor.co.uk



Drew Goudy had the Ride MX Factor in '06



WIN!WIN!WIN!

Josh Coppins' and Billy Mac's crappy kit

2006 MARKS the end of an era for Josh Coppins and Billy MacKenzie as both GP winning riders are moving on to new teams with new clothing deals for '07. Kiwi JC leaves CAS Honda after being with the British-based team for the past four years while Bike-it Yamaha's Billy MacKenzie bails from the Steve Dixon-owned outfit he's ridden for forever and ever and ever.

To celebrate their mutual moves we've done a deal with the two top stars to offer you what's probably the last ever chance to win their current crop of kit – Josh's rather fetching Alpinestars number and Billy's fabulous Fox finery – in this awesome tripletabulous competition.

Tripletabulous we hear you ask? Yes, tripletabulous! Unlike your average DBR competition where we ask you to answer a question then write in on a postcard or sealed-down envelope (which some of you still haven't mastered by the way) this time there are three ways in which you can enter...

Way one is to do it the good old fashioned way we've already mentioned, way two is to do it online at www.dirtbikerider.com and way three is to visit our sensual stand at the Dirt Bike Show, fill in a tripletabulous competition entry form and then slip it in our box. It's dead easy, almost as easy as the question you need to answer to win the kit...

Billy MacKenzie won one MX2 GP in 2006 but where did he win?

- Was it: A) Sugo, Japan
B) Bellpuig, Spain
C) Namur, Belgium
D) Agueda, Portugal
E) Logsville, Uranus

If you've figured out the answer and you haven't already entered online by following the competition link at www.dirtbikerider.com or slipped it in our box at the Dirt Bike Show then we'd like you to write it down on a postcard or sealed-down envelope along with your name, address and a daytime telephone number then send it to us at 'Tripletabulous competition', DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 4AG.

All the entries we receive before high noon on December 15 will then be shoved in a great big bag with the first correct answer randomly drawn winning both sets of kit.

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**Cover: Pioneer Yamaha
main man Brad
Anderson in action at
the Hallam FM Arena
(Sutty)
Contents main image:
Mike Alessi does a
disappearing act at the
Sheffield SX
(Sutty)**



MAX ATTACK!

ACU release 2007 Maxxis championship schedule

THE MAXXIS British Motocross Championship appears to have had a bit of a shakedown for 2007 as new venues, a new youth class at four of the eight rounds and even a Saturday race on the mainland look set to rock the schedule.

The series kicks off at the awesome Canada Heights circuit in March then each UK region – bar the Midlands – gets a Maxxis round before the series ends in Herefordshire in September.

Two new tracks for the Maxxis series next year are Langrish, near Portsmouth, which annually hosts the Ken Hall International and Brampton, Cumbria, which is a well-known and well-liked venue near Carlisle. Brampton's seen British Masters, BYMX and British four-stroke champs action in recent years and the hillside, sand-based circuit offers excellent racing.

As well as the new circuits being exciting additions to the championship, there's more great news for race fans as an all new MX2 youth championship for nippers on MX2 machines will have races at the Landrake, Langrish, Brampton and Pontrilas rounds.

With both '06 champs back to defend their crowns in '07 you can almost guarantee there's gonna be bar-banging duels to the very end of both the MX1 and MX2 championships.

The MX1 title chase promises to be a corker as defending champ Ken De Dycker will have the very motivated brand-new factory Kawasaki rider Billy MacKenzie to contend with along with perennial

MX1 class challengers James Noble and Gordon Crockard. And there are also rumours suggesting that four-time British champion Paul Cooper is looking to return to our championship chase.

The MX2 championship is always wide open and the '07 series should be no different. It's gonna be a battle of young versus old as Tommy Searle will be looking to edge out series vets Stephen Sword, Brad Anderson, Wayne Smith and Tom Church.

And let's not forget two-time champ Carl Nunn who's looking to three-peat in '07. Nunny rode awesomely all year – recovering well from that massive crash at Matchams which dented his points lead – to clinch the title in an awesome showdown with Searle at Hawkstone in September.

So the countdown to Canada Heights on March 11 begins – and don't forget the Hawkstone International on March 4 either!

We'll see you at 'em all...

When and where...

2007 Maxxis British Motocross Championship

March 11	Canada Heights, Kent
March 25	Landrake, Cornwall
April 8	Lyng, Norfolk
June 3	Langrish, Hampshire
June 23 (Sat)	Desertmartin, Northern Ireland
July 8	Whitby, North Yorkshire
August 12	Brampton, Cumbria
September 15 (Sat)	Pontrilas, Herefordshire



STEPHEN SWORD

IT'S SNOREDY!

IF HE'S NOT BEING PUT TO SLEEP BEFORE AN OPERATION STEVIE'S BEEN PUTTING HIS VISITORS TO SLEEP WITH HIS ENTERTAINING STORIES

WORDS BY STEPHEN SWORD PHOTO BY RAYARCHER.COM

THIS MONTH started off with a trip to Belgium for a check-up with my doctor. My progress has been good but I was having problems moving my toes up and down – this was due to a lot of scar tissue which had built up around the tendons that control the movement in my toes.

The doctor sent me for some scans and an x-ray before he made a decision on the best way forward which was to have a small operation on my toes and have the plates and pins removed. It was a bit unexpected at first but he explained that the bones were fine and that it would be better for next season – and the future – if they were removed. He fitted me in the next day for the op so Jodie and I booked ourselves into a hotel for the evening.

After a light breakfast we headed to the hospital where someone came to take me to my room and I waited for the call to go down. So I watched a bit of TV and read until, three hours later, the nurse came to wheel me to the operating theatre where I was hooked up to every machine going. As the guy came to put me to sleep I asked him to do it slowly so I could enjoy the feeling – he started laughing but did as I asked and then asked me some questions to which I gave some stupid answers.

Next thing I know I was waking up with the op done and dusted. There was no pain and the operation had gone well so after a while they took me back to my room where Jodie was waiting. She couldn't believe how well I looked and how pain-free I felt – she'd seen the pain I was in after my first op so I think she had visions of that all over again.

I was pretty sleepy but woke up in the middle of the night to move my pillow and as I lifted it up I found a pot underneath which was full of plates and pins – two plates and 14 pins to be exact. The doctor thought I might like to take them home so he left them there for me – a cool thing to keep I reckon. So now everyone who comes to my house gets to see them – and gets to get bored by the same story! The doctor was very happy with the way the op went so after a couple of nights in hospital he sent me home. Jodie had to drive home as I was on crutches – it was her first time driving abroad and she was a little nervous but she did very well and managed without any problems.

I have to rest for a couple of weeks to let the wounds heal up before I have my stitches out. Having the plates and pins removed has probably put me back a few weeks but in the long run it will be much better. I have a range of exercises I have to stick to every day to work on the movement but I'm not allowed to put any weight on it for a couple of weeks. Once I can it will be time to start to build and get strength back in it again. It just seems so long now since I've raced that I'm impatient to get things moving but I just have to go through the

motions of rehab to get myself strong and fit for when I get back on a bike.

I have to go to the Dirt Bike Show for Kawasaki this month – it should be fun meeting up with everyone again. I'm pleased to still be with Kawasaki next year. I have a really good relationship with them and with the factory. They've shown great faith in me and expect good results as I do. We will be working hard to achieve our goals in the future.

Since being injured I got myself one of those Sony PSPs. My favourite game is Tiger Woods Golf '06 – I got myself the '07 version but when I loaded the new software it decided to shut off and lock itself. Gutted! I had to send it back to Sony to be fixed and I'm still waiting for it to come back. I completed the whole of the '06 version but, unfortunately, that's the nearest I get to playing the real thing at the moment. But when anyone asks me if I've ever had a hole in one I say yes – but I don't tell them it was on a PSP!

I keep the rest of my days busy with taking the dogs out every morning for a walk. This gets me out of the house and an hour on crutches is a little work-out for me. I do some upper body stuff as well but I can't start cycling for a couple of weeks yet.

I had a visit from Hot Tub (Molson Kawasaki truck driver) last night. He just popped in to see how things were going so we had a takeaway and a good chinwag. Later this week I'm going back to Scotland for a few days and I'm looking forward to a change and to seeing my brother.

Well guys, I have to go – Jodie's just come in with two big pumpkins for Halloween! Looks like pumpkin soup for me for the next few days. Take care and see ya soon!



ONE-FIDDIES FOR KIDDIES!

AS WE predicted in last month's exclusive first test of Honda's one-fiddy four-popper, the ACU have given the new machine from Big Red the all-clear to line-up against 85cc bikes from January 1.

However, try and race one before this date and you're going to be disappointed. "I am aware that a number of competitors have already traded this season's machine and purchased 150cc four-strokes," explains ACU MX committee chairman Roy Humphrey. "Hopefully these riders have bought the machines with a view to practising or preparing them in readiness for the 2007 season and will not be disappointed if they attempt to enter a meeting this season.

"I believe the machines will be a popular choice for the classes and seeing the BSMA will also be allowing these machines into similar classes only confirms that it is the correct decision."



ELITE RESPONSE

Huge interest in new youth series

ORGANISERS of the Events 22/DEP Elite Youth Cup are reporting an overwhelming initial response with over 200 riders registering an interest in the exciting new series.

The Elite Youth Cup is a unique mix of four outdoor MX rounds and three indoor SX rounds at top-class venues. "To get such a great response from so many riders is not only pleasing for us as organisers but proves that something different is what's required to lift the youth scene," says co-organiser Matt Bates.

Roy Emberson's Pioneer Yamaha youth squad – Jack Rowe, Daniel Arnold and Jamie McCanney – is the first big team to commit to contesting the series. "It's so important that our team of young riders race at the best organised events throughout the year – not only for themselves but for our sponsors," reckons Embo. "Although the series is a new one I've got no doubt that they'll lift youth racing to the next level. I'd recommend other teams and riders to follow our lead."

Classes will be for 50cc Autos, 65cc Juniors, SW85cc, BW85cc, 125cc Seniors and a Youth Elite category for 125cc two-strokes and 250cc four-strokes.

Outdoor dates are April 28/29 at a GP venue that's still to be confirmed plus June 23/24 (Finningley), July 21/22 (Landrake) and September 8/9 (Culham).

For more info go to www.eliteyouthcup.co.uk



PHOTOTRIAL PIC-FEST!

THIS YEAR'S must-have read for trials riders and followers of the feet-up game everywhere has got to be the brand-new 2006 Phototrial publication covering all classes in the WTC – that's the full-on championship division plus Junior and Youth 125cc categories.

On top of this, well-respected author Mario Candellone has also included sections detailing the main riders, the Trial des Nations, the Scottish Six Day Trial, ladies' international competition and several national championships. That's a whole lotta trials as Robert Plant once almost sang...

Jam-packed with over 130 pages of colour pics, Phototrial costs £29.95 and is available from UK distributor g2f. It could well be the ideal Christmas present for the trials fanatic in your life.

To reserve your copy email info@g2f.co.uk or call 0161 7636660.



TESTING TIME

**Book your place
at '07 4RT launch**

UK IMPORTERS James Sandiford Motorcycles are marking the launch of the 2007 4RT Montesa with an official test day at The Coniston Hotel, Coniston Cold, Skipton, on December 3.

As well as a fleet of the four-strokes being made available for Joe Public to test, expert tuition will be on hand in the shape of Dougie Lampkin and Amos Bilbao.

Places will be limited so if you're interested you need to book in advance by contacting g2f on 0161 7636660 or firing off an email to bookings@g2f.co.uk

GORDON CROCKARD

BROWN NOSE!

WITH AN INTERNATIONAL IN CZECHO, A SUPERMOTO IN BELGIUM, A BEACH RACE AT WESTON AND A SX IN SHEFFIELD UNDER HIS BELT, GORDY'S GOT A LOT OF PEOPLE TO THANK

WORDS BY GORDON CROCKARD

HEY EVERYBODY! It's column time so cheers for taking the time to read this far and now let me try and keep it interesting enough to get your attention right to the end... Plenty of variety spicing up my life over the last few weeks with an international race in Czecho, a show in Germany, a street supermoto race in Belgium, a sidecar three-hour race at Weston and just at the weekend the Sheffield SX.

From the beginning of March I've raced every single weekend – that's 34 weekends in total and now finally I won't be racing so much for a while. You might wonder what I'll do with my time now seeing as the official season of championship racing doesn't start until March.

Well I can tell you now that for sure the time will pass quickly and the list of things to do has never been so big. First on the list is to get a ride sorted out for the 2007 season. Due to the financial state that GP MX is in it appears I may have to look elsewhere towards paying the bills. You might not know it but world championship motocross doesn't actually pay or provide many opportunities to earn money. There is no prize money, qualifying money, start money or any sort of money. So how do riders make money? They must rely on agreeing terms with a race team who pays them money. So what if the race teams don't have any money to pay the riders? The riders ride for no money. Great!

At the moment the only way I'll get paid to ride is if I take on the delivery boy deal at Pizza Hut. They'll give me a bike, a uniform, a salary and a street map of Belfast. Seriously, though I'm only joking and I do have choices for what to do next year if I was in it to make money I'd have to take the highest payer – and that would possibly be Pizza Hut!

I'm trying to create a period in my life where all my energy is directed into getting as high as possible up the world championship and British championship leaderboard. And I mean to make the equation simple. All I want to be worried about and having to deal with is two things – being the fastest I possibly can and getting the maximum out of my body fitness wise. Being fitter and faster will bring results.

I mentioned earlier that I've still been racing for the last month and I've covered quite a wide variety of events. The race in Czecho was an international team event where I joined up with Martin Kohút from Slovakia and Yorkshire's James Noble. We tied on points for the win but ended up second due to the better last result rule. Good fun trip and a few quid earned with some start money.

The next weekend was Mettet in Belgium for the 20th annual Superbiker street supermoto. Team McKee were kind enough to lend me a set of wheels for the Wulfsport Honda MX bike I rode and super suspension man Gibber from Russell's modified the forks and shock into

Tarmac spec to keep my Bridgestone slicks glued to the road. Okay, so that last spot of butt kissing is more like an interview from an AMA podium but I must thank the people who get me on a track at the races. Thank you...

A long time ago in the glorious summer I agreed with a friend to contest the Weston Beach Race. No big task you may think but if I were to tell you I did it on a sidecar you might think differently. Oh yes, Kenny Gardener and I finished 26th and, more importantly, in one piece. Not having ever sat on a sidecar before, never mind ride one, made the whole three-hour race that bit more exciting. I was the driver of the CR500 chariot and first held the handlebars in the parc ferme on my way to the startline on Saturday morning. I pretty much learnt the basics by talking to other drivers.

Kenny did a great job as I'm sure he was pretty nervous knowing I was controlling where we were meant to be going. He used to be a passenger in sidecarcross racing on a regular weekend basis but that was 20 years ago. We managed okay and after three hours I had it sorted on the driving side of things and Kenny was totally exhausted. A few spectacular crashes and beginner errors produced the odd bruise here and there but we both enjoyed it immensely. And we raised quite a lot of money for charity and we would both like to thank everyone who contributed and helped the weekend come together. Back-peddalling for a quick second I must thank SM Racing for the lend of the tyre warmers. Many thanks again!

Swiftly moving on from the brown nosing column I'm clearly using as a thank you advert, I'll report on how the Sheffield Supercross went. I got third. Is that too much detail? No? Okay, I'll tell more. I borrowed Graeme Jellie's CR250 two-stroke Honda and Gibber and I took the spanners to prep her up for the tight indoor track. The bike was a lot of fun to ride and I loved getting on the whoops and hearing the two-stroke bark. This was helped by Craig at DEP who supplied me with a special exhaust just to give me that edge. Vuillemin won and an American SX guy called Jason Thomas was second with me to follow in third.

The Belfast SX is next on my events list and I can't wait now I've got a taste for it again after getting on the Sheffield podium. Also on the Belfast nights – they're November 24/25 in case you don't know – is the FMX display. During this show Kenny and I are going to run a set of freestyle sidecar tricks and finish off with a double back-flip. Not a double rotation like Travis but more so a double flip because there will be two of us on the sidecar. Booked your tickets yet?

PS Get well soon Ricky Watt



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Jean-Michel Bail!

Actually, not that famous Frenchman (and to be honest this quad FMX pilot is actually French Canadian – but never let the truth get in the way of a contrived headline!)... Christian Gagnon aborts an attempted back-flip during the H Bomb Squad display at Weston – amazingly, he got away with just a broken tibia and, by the time this issue of DBR hits the shelves, should be convalescing back at home in Canada. Get well soon Christian...

Photo by still-mx.com



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BLARNEY

WORDS BY STEVIE MILLS PHOTO BY SUTTY

ODYSSEY AH-OY!

ONE OF THE BIGGEST SX EVENTS IN EUROPE, THERE ARE JUST TWO WEEKS TO GO BEFORE THE BELFAST SUPERCROSS BLASTS OFF...

WHERE? ODYSSEY ARENA, BELFAST

WHEN? NOVEMBER 24/25

WHY? IT'S SHOWTIME!

ALL EYES are firmly fixed towards the Events 22-staged spectacular feast of top class international supercross, freestyle and celebrity minibike racing. Year on year, flamboyant SX entrepreneur Matt Bates seems to raise the bar on what is now one of Europe's most prestigious motorcycle events. In 2005 the mix of professional racers, big air acrobats and celebrities left everybody in attendance crying out for more of the same.

So how can Mr Bates possibly improve on perfection? Well Odyssey 2006 promises to provide explosive action as the on-form and double Odyssey winner Gordon Crockard goes head to head with previous winners Jeff Dement from the US of A and 2004 champion Jean Sebastien Roy from Canada.

Both MX1 and SX Lites are catered for with the top six in each class meeting in the Grand Final at the end of the evening's entertainment. Representing Ireland, GC will have the company of Martin Barr, Philip McCullough, Wayne Garrett and Suzuki mounted Adam Lyons to keep the local interest fully focused.

GC is our only realistic hope for a podium result overall and coming from a third place at Sheffield his confidence will be high. Martin enjoys riding in front of his home fans and will want to put on a great show – top six will be enough to make the Grand Final. And will this be the last competitive outing for McC?

McC, Wayne and Adam will give it their best shot but SX requires 100 per cent full-on commitment so if he has retirement on his mind McC will have to put such thoughts to one side. Wayne has youth and speed on his side but lacks the experience to make the difference while Adam's lack of racing throughout the year could show in such a high quality field of international SX stars.

Riders from no less than four continents will be in attendance, ranging from SX champions and GP winners to budding young stars – so book your tickets for Odyssey 2006. Now!

Minibike competition will take place at Ireland's only indoor practice facility on November 28 – call Chris on **07855 521106** for entry details. The **Dirt-worx.co.uk** minibike winter series is becoming an alternative extreme sport during the 'wet season' and is drawing competitors from all types of motorcycling along with participants from the mountain bike and jet ski fraternities.

Phil McCullough runs regular Monday evening SX schools for both

youth and adults on the revamped Dirt-worx circuit – call Phil or the Dirt-worx number for booking details.

The final championship of 2006 went down to the last round of the series which was cancelled due to bad weather (no real surprise there in late October) after just one block of races. In probably the worst track conditions ever seen at Ballykelly it was Tommy Merton who ended the year on a high after winning the season's final moto on the deeply rutted sand circuit.

For a man that had just rewritten Irish MX history, Phil McCullough was not as euphoric as you might have expected as he drove home from Ballykelly having won every championship available on the island during 2006. The Ulster and Irish MX1/ MX2 champion's mood was sombre as he reflected on a journey that has spanned some 20 seasons – and then some. "It simply doesn't get any better than this – it's the end of an era for sure," he said. Odyssey '06 may just be the grand finale of McC's racing career...

Bridesmaid to McC in all the four championships, Wayne Garrett enjoyed a spot of Tarmac racing recently when the popular KTM rider took part in round one of the P+O Supermoto at Bishops Court. Wayne

gave a good account of himself and his sixth and fifth place finishes in the A Finals were even more amazing considering this was Wayne's first ever ride on a SM machine.

There is many a rider that would welcome the news of the Ballymena man's retirement from the sport that he has been at the forefront of since the Bay City Rollers were on Top of The Pops (Shaggy still has those monkey boots and tartan parallels). But I personally can't see McC hanging up his boots yet –

he has too much energy and competitiveness in him to stand by and watch his new protégé Wayne Garrett take the helm of Moto-One for '07.

Controversial for sure – and he can be as subtle as a fox in a hen house when trying to get his point across – McC has got an agenda and one worth listening to regarding the future of MX in Ireland. We'll have to wait until after Christmas to know for sure but I would not bet against the #55 pilot burning the midnight oil in Fitness First during the dark winter months in preparation for next season. And congratulations to Philip and Cherry on their recent engagement – I can't wait for the party at Beckingham Palace.

Finally this month on behalf of the MCCNI, MRA and the entire motocross community, may I pass on our heartfelt sorrow to his family and friends after the passing of young David Nelson. God speed...

Stevie



MARTIN BARR IN ACTION AT LAST YEAR'S BELFAST SX

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JONTY'S BOX

WORDS AND PHOTO BY JONTY EDMUNDS

LEAVE IT!

THE FIM MAY HAVE RECENTLY CONFIRMED THE ARRIVAL OF A NEW INDOOR ENDURO CUP FOR '07 BUT DOES THE SPORT REALLY NEED AN OFFICIALLY RECOGNISED INDOOR SERIES?

I SOMETIMES wonder just how much thought really goes into the FIM decision making process. As the governing body for international motorcycle sport I'm sure, or should I say I hope, that their intentions are always good. But having recently announced the introduction of an Indoor Enduro Cup, well, I'm not convinced that they always put their thinking caps on properly.

The Indoor Enduro FIM Cup, explained a small paragraph in a recently issued FIM press release, will be introduced from November 2007 (two weeks after the ISDE) and will run until March 2008 (the last event must be held no later than two weeks before the first World Enduro Championship event). After announcing when the new cup will run from and when it will end no more information was given.

Now the announcement of a new indoor enduro series may well be viewed, as I'm sure the FIM intended it to be, as being a good thing for the sport but I have reservations. Bringing together a select number of independently run indoor enduro events (three to four at last count) and making them part of a new cup makes no sense at all as far as I'm concerned.

Ever since I travelled to Barcelona to witness my first international indoor enduro I have been sure of two things. Firstly, that indoor enduro racing provides some of the most unpredictable, entertaining, edge of your seat racing there is – more so than all but the very best US supercross. Secondly, that at no point should an indoor enduro championship be formed.

The Indoor World Trials Championship, or more precisely what has happened to indoor trials events since they became a world championship, is the exact reason why an indoor enduro series is a bad idea. Not so many years ago indoor trials events were exciting and entertaining for the spectators and reasonably laidback and enjoyable for the riders. By contrast they are now little more than calculated displays of technical excellence and nowhere near as entertaining to watch as they used to be. Sure, a select few earn more from indoor trials events than ever before but while some riders get more spectators get less – a lot less.

Ever since the IWTC was born the whole dynamic of the indoor feet-up sport has changed. Top riders knew that more important than winning individual events was trying to win championships which meant that showmanship – real showmanship that kept crowds entertained and helped the sport's popularity grow – went sailing out of the window. With only a select few riders capable of winning modern-day indoor trials the

fun factor has well and truly been removed along with some of the sport's more entertaining characters.

Indoor enduro racing is both very different yet in many ways similar to indoor trials. The fact that indoor enduro sport involves racing will always guarantee a certain degree of crowd-pleasing action but a big part of why that racing is so good is because there is no pressure on competitors to perform which often brings out their best. Whether they win, lose or draw in Barcelona, Vegas or Genoa it is the sport of enduro that goes home a winner with all riders – winners, losers and even non-qualifiers – happy to have been a part of the show.

Now you could argue that a cup is not a world championship and that little will change. But you could also argue that the introduction of a cup is the FIM's way of testing the water – softening the blow – before setting up an Indoor World Enduro Championship. If that were to happen indoor enduro racing could well go down the exact same road as indoor trials. And that's what concerns me. As it stands indoor enduro events are few and far between which is a good thing for a number of reasons. Firstly, riders longing for some time off after a hard season need only compete in a few select events while each of those events – due to being staged in different parts of the world and at different times in the

off-season – take nothing away from one another and stop international enduro sport hibernating during the winter.

The three established indoor enduro events – Barcelona, Vegas and Genoa – are all very different to one another but are organised by people that have a definite passion for the sport and the indoor concept. If a championship is formed the FIM will no doubt be looking to make it a 'true' series, which will mean more than three events will be needed. New indoor enduro promoters and organisers may well pop-up all

across Europe hoping to jump on the bandwagon. While many will have a proven indoor trials or supercross organisational record some may not, which is again reason to be cautious. As far as indoor enduro is concerned less is most definitely more.

Whether an Indoor Enduro Cup will be a good thing for enduro sport, whether it will even happen or whether it will last if it actually gets up and running remains to be seen. But if it does get off the ground I just hope that the powers-that-be take a good long look at the sport of indoor trials and ask themselves whether that series is now better or worse for becoming a world championship. Then they just may see sense and decide that as things stand there's no need for an Indoor Enduro Cup.



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CAGE RAGE!

My name is Mike and I'm a very keen rider. I've ridden in the army for several years and decided to keep it up when I left the forces. I owned a YZF and loved it to bits. My friend has a two-stroke YZ and when it comes to kicking over the bikes for a quick blast he's done about three laps by the time I get my beast going.

So this summer I decided to go back to the good old two-stroke screamers and bought myself a CR250. I live on the Wirral and took a drive one Saturday to Nottingham with the boss (that's the missus) to pick up my new bike.

When I got home I was buzzing and couldn't wait to get out so my friend Simon and I decided to go the next day to a local field. I got going and did one lap of a 400 metre track and stopped next to my mate – the adrenaline was pumping and as I set off and eased the throttle on I found myself looking at the stars, watching my bike on one wheel shooting off on its own.

To my utter disappointment I could not get up or feel my left leg! You can tell from the photos what sort of damage I've done due to the 16 pins and cage that are holding the tib and fib together. I tried to persuade the hospital for a copy of the X-ray but they were having none of it.

Mike, via email

Whoa! That's some serious metalwork right there. Get well soon mate!



DREAM JOB?

My name is Ellie and my dream is to become a pro MX photographer for MX magazines.

I was wondering if you could put me in the right direction on how I can go about it.

Do I have to become a freelancer first and work up?

Ellie, East Sussex

The easiest way to become a pro photographer for a MX magazine is to take high-quality, action-packed images of the right riders at the right events and then let magazine editors see them. It only takes one editor to like your work and your dream may just come true.

RUBBISH RANT!

I'd just like to follow on from what Steve Dixon said in his open letter about the problems at the des Nations. He mirrors exactly what happens on a weekly basis at our local club – albeit on a smaller scale. The majority of our riders and supporters are tidy, clean and polite but the rest...

What some people do in a portaloos is unbelievable – burgers in the sink! Who eats in a toilet? And as for some people's aim, well I know they are nervous but come on the seat is big enough.

The litter that is regularly left all over the pits and track area is disgusting. One week a woman tried to give me her child's dirty nappy to take home as I was desperately trying to clear up and not be the last person out of the pits yet again.

I love our sport but find the constant battle against the yob culture very wearing, very few people take responsibility for themselves. Someone else is always around to clear up. We have lost tracks because of this attitude. You could have a hundred bins and the lazy buggers would still chuck it on the grass.

Michelle, via email

Good points well made Michelle. I was thinking the very same thing t'other week when I visited a local youth event and was horrified by some of the things I was seeing – rubbish everywhere, trashed toilets, riding in the pits and so on.

You can't really blame the club for its members' misdemeanours but what is the answer to this oh-so important problem? If anyone has any ideas how to deal with these problem people or you maybe think that dropping litter and vandalising toilets is acceptable at your local motocross event then please write in and tell us...

X-FLOPPERS

I don't know if you guys saw Channel 4's coverage of the Red Bull X-Fighters recently or what your opinion of it was but my friends and I were greatly disappointed with it. The fact that the show was on at midnight wasn't too much of a surprise, as most extreme sports are still not quite worthy of prime-time terrestrial coverage yet but the quantity and quality of riding footage was appalling.

Realistically, there was probably under eight minutes of riding in the half hour show with very annoying editing which showed very few take-offs and landings. Only two of the riders names were even mentioned (one of which was Pastrana) and when tricks were referred to it was done so with a great lack of knowledge and understanding of the sport.

It just really 'grinds my gears' that TV producers feel they have to use famous presenters (in this case a welsh idiot from T4 with obviously no understanding of motocross let alone freestyle) for their shows when anybody who can actually do the sport is likely to do a much better job!

Good work with your mag – more freestyle!
Adam, Hertfordshire

I bet another thing that really grinds your gears is when you can't find the droids you're looking for, right?



MONSTER MURRAY II

Hi it's Murray here. I wrote in a while back to ask if you knew where I could find some Monster Energy. After telling me I could only find it in America I decided to go there and get myself some.

I was very excited about going with my mum and dad because they had all the money – just kidding! We got there and within 20 minutes I found myself some – four crates to be precise. But I was going mad because I forgot to bring my new issue of DBR so I had to settle for some crappy American magazine.

Murray, Scotland.

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No-Toil AIR BOX CLEANER

If you believe what you see on TV you'd think that citrus-based cleaners were the daddy when it comes to removing grime. I think that's total bull. I sent Hector the Halloween Tangerine to go clean the gunk out of my CRF's airbox but after three hours he'd got nowhere – maybe because he's got no legs.

After that experiment I came to the conclusion that citrus-based cleaners must suck – bad Hector! So instead I broke open a bottle of citrus-coloured No-Toil Air Box Cleaner and got to work. After spraying some in my box and waiting 30 seconds the grime just wiped away in a jiffy. This stuff's frickin' awesome – kinda like Mr Muscle for your bike's airbox!

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If Hector the Halloween Tangerine had a girlfriend (which he doesn't by the way – he's a fruit!) he'd be sure to hook her up with some of this quality Skin Industries girls' gear from Freestylextreme.

And with Christmas just around the corner it wouldn't be a bad idea to splash out on your sister, lover or even your mother because extra brownie points could be vital if you're gonna get what you want this festive season.

Price: £19.99

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If you're sick of the clean-cut look of your plain white Alpinestars Tech 10s then these sticker kits could just be the thing you need to brighten up your boots!

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THOR HERO GOGGLE

Although he's a very scary looking chap, Hector the Halloween Tangerine understands the need for quality protection what with him being a relatively squashy fruit and all. And when you're out riding your eyes need protecting too because if a rock hits 'em at 40-odd miles an hour they're also gonna be relatively squishy.

So be a smart fruit like Hector and hook yourself up with a pair of Thor Hero goggles that not only look pretty darn cool but also come with an optically correct, mirror-smoked lexan lens with an anti-fog coating which also protects your eyes from ultra harmful UV rays.

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THE MANAGER!

Rather than just sitting back and resting on his laurels, former world 125cc champ Jamie Dobb has taken on a management role to help take athletes like Tommy Searle to the top

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson



Jamie reckons Tommy Searle's got what it takes to go all the way

Dobber won at Namur with two busted collarbones – now that's hardcore!



JAMIE DOBB is never flavour of the month with the ACU and he's often the target of verbal abuse from paddock pundits. But Britain's most recent adult MX world champion and now personal manager to Tommy Searle doesn't beat about the bush when it comes to confronting his critics.

"You see them thinking we're only there to take a percentage and they act as though we should take what they consider a real job but if they speak to our riders and find out what we really do they might find out the truth!"

"It would have been a dream to have had someone do this for me when I was a rider because I know that if people had done for me when I was world champion what I do for my riders now then I would have benefited tremendously. And it's not just a financial thing!"

Okay, we can all blow our own trumpet so what does the client think? Tommy Searle may still be only 17 but he has a mature head on his shoulders for his age and he has no regrets in his association with the Dobber. "Jamie's done everything he promised and a lot more too. He helps me out with everything – not just the management side. I don't have to do anything as far as sorting things, just say yes or no and what I want.

"And we've become good friends. I stay at

Immaculate preparation was the key to his successful '01 world championship campaign



his house and in the winter he puts his life on hold and takes me to the gym every day. You can't ask more from a manager than what he has done for me."

And Dobb is also responsible for what Tommy believes to be the single most important factor in his success story. "Kurt Gibbons – my trainer. He's the guy who trained Jamie to be champion of the world. I've been with him since the end of last year and without him there is no way I would be where I am now."

Dobb is part of the management company WMG (Wasserman Media Group). "In America we have Travis Pastrana and Chad Reed on our books," explains Jamie, "but WMG is not only into motorsports. We also have soccer players, football players, baseball, basketball. We are one of the largest management companies in the world."

"We make all of Travis' DVDs, we're handling the marketing and naming rights for the new Wembley stadium and we did the deals for the Home Depot centre in America as well as Arsenal's new Emirates stadium."

Jamie's introduction to WMG came via Bob Moore and The Family, the managerial group now integrated into WMG. "I called Bob and it all came from there. I look after the European side of things. I don't go to the overseas races

but I go to all of the Moto GPs in Europe and when they don't clash I go to motocross GPs and British championships. I look after John Hopkins and James Ellison in Moto GP and Marc De Reuver and Tommy Searle in motocross. I was also looking after Sebastien Tortelli but that was cut short this year."

"In America we have Bob and Jimmy Button but when riders like Ryan Mills want to come over here then I take care of that."

"What we have as a company is that we have people who understand both America and Europe. I spent several years over there racing and Bob raced here for most of his career. I know what it's like for a European to go to America and Bob knows what it's like for an American to come here. Bob understands the European mentality and this is why we can offer such a good package."

It's not Jamie's first job on the 'other side'. "I have had a management company with my father-in-law since the end of '99 in football management in England. We have 18 players on our books including some England Under 21s. And back in '96 in America with the Suzuki team I did the Quicksilver sponsorship for myself and it's something that I have always enjoyed."

So what does 'management' boil down to in

specific terms? "We know the lawyers, we know how to set up a bank account, how to get a mortgage. We take all of the worries off their hands so they can concentrate on riding a motorcycle. Any large corporation works like this with staff to do these jobs but we do it for individuals."

"I work very closely with Tommy and he's a pleasure to work with. We structure everything for him – his training, where he can ride, everything. Tommy has his schedules and he sticks to it. If our sportsmen need a car, if they need a new house, we can help find all of these things – when Tommy goes to America next year we will simply present him with a portfolio of properties which are available. From that he will pick his own house and we take care of everything else – all he has to do is sign the paperwork and it will be ready for him to move in when he arrives. And the trust grows with everything we do – whatever the riders need and want we get it for them."

"A lot of people in Europe look at me and think I'm just trying to take money off the kid but at the end of the day we do a fantastic job. I have done it the wrong way and the right way – probably more so than anyone – but I have learnt from my mistakes. We offer a fantastic service."

Jamie reckons his RWJ deal didn't give him the tools he needed to win another world title



"Even a lot of the teams look on it as though it's going to cost them more and of course we try to get what the riders are worth – their market value – but we are also there to look after the teams.

"In America we have even brought seven-figure sponsorship deals to supercross. We brought all of the sponsors for the Factory Connection team, Samsung and so on. We brought the energy drinks like SoBe and Monster into the sport and we did the Nike deal for Chad Reed's team.

"We are a service agency and the customer is king. If we weren't doing a good job, we would not have so many customers – not only the riders but also the companies we represent. Within Moto GP there are big things happening of which we are a part and things are moving fast.

"Three years ago WMG had three people working for them, with the new acquisition which is now taking place this will have grown to 200 people worldwide. We have offices in LA, Carlsbad, Charlotte, New York, Washington DC and London. And the betting is that if there's a question to be solved, then one of those 200 can solve it. We work together as a team and we all depend on each other to offer the service we do.

"Jeff Slack, who runs our London office, first started with Michael Jordan. He did all of the marketing for Michael and he spent four years with Inter Milan – he's an American who speaks fluent Italian and understands the Italian mentality and that is what makes the difference.

"Our company is well known and well respected all over America. And when major corporations see that people are satisfied with what we do, they contact us – we get calls from companies asking where they should place their money.

"We are working for the sportsmen, their sponsors and the teams too. We bring teams a rider who can concentrate fully on his job, whose head is not mixed up with all sorts of things he shouldn't have to worry about. And we are open to listening to the teams. When a rider's not performing as a team would expect

then we are there to help them sort it out, to make situations better."

So how did the Searle connection come about? "I'm always looking for new talent and Tommy being English adds an additional passion to help. I was our last world champion and I'd love nothing more than to help someone else emulate what I achieved. I spoke with Tommy and his dad on several occasions at the beginning of last year and we made an agreement.

"Tommy is a fantastic talent, his work rate is second to none and I think I have helped mould it a bit with advice. It's a little extra but it's something I try to do with all of my athletes. I want to help them to be the best athlete they can.

"I offer the services of Kurt Gibbons to all of my athletes and I do it because I believe sincerely that Kurt is the best trainer in the world. I trained with the Jeff Spencers, I looked all over the world and I found Kurt down the road in Derby!

"For me it all came together with KTM too but without Kurt I would not have been world champion. We worked on a structure and developed it, getting better and better every single day and Tommy would not be where he is today without Kurt.

"It would have been nice if Tommy had done it at Hawkstone. I'd have loved nothing more than for him to beat my record as youngest ever national champion but it wasn't to be. But he did the best he could and came up just short. You only have to tell the kid once and he doesn't make the same mistake again. At Hawkstone he didn't ride his best in the first moto but he only had to win one race.

"I told him during the week that he could not have prepared better, so just go out there and enjoy it and what will be will be. He had faith in his condition to hammer it out round Hawkstone with Carl and that second moto was probably the fastest Carl has ever gone in his life in a second moto. They were that far ahead.

"What impresses me most about Tommy is his passion. He's like me, very emotional. If he has a bad race you can see how it hurts. ►





profile

Instead of defending his 125cc crown Dobber moved up to a 250 factory Katoom in '02

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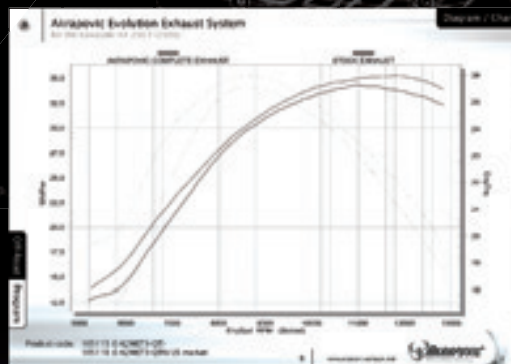
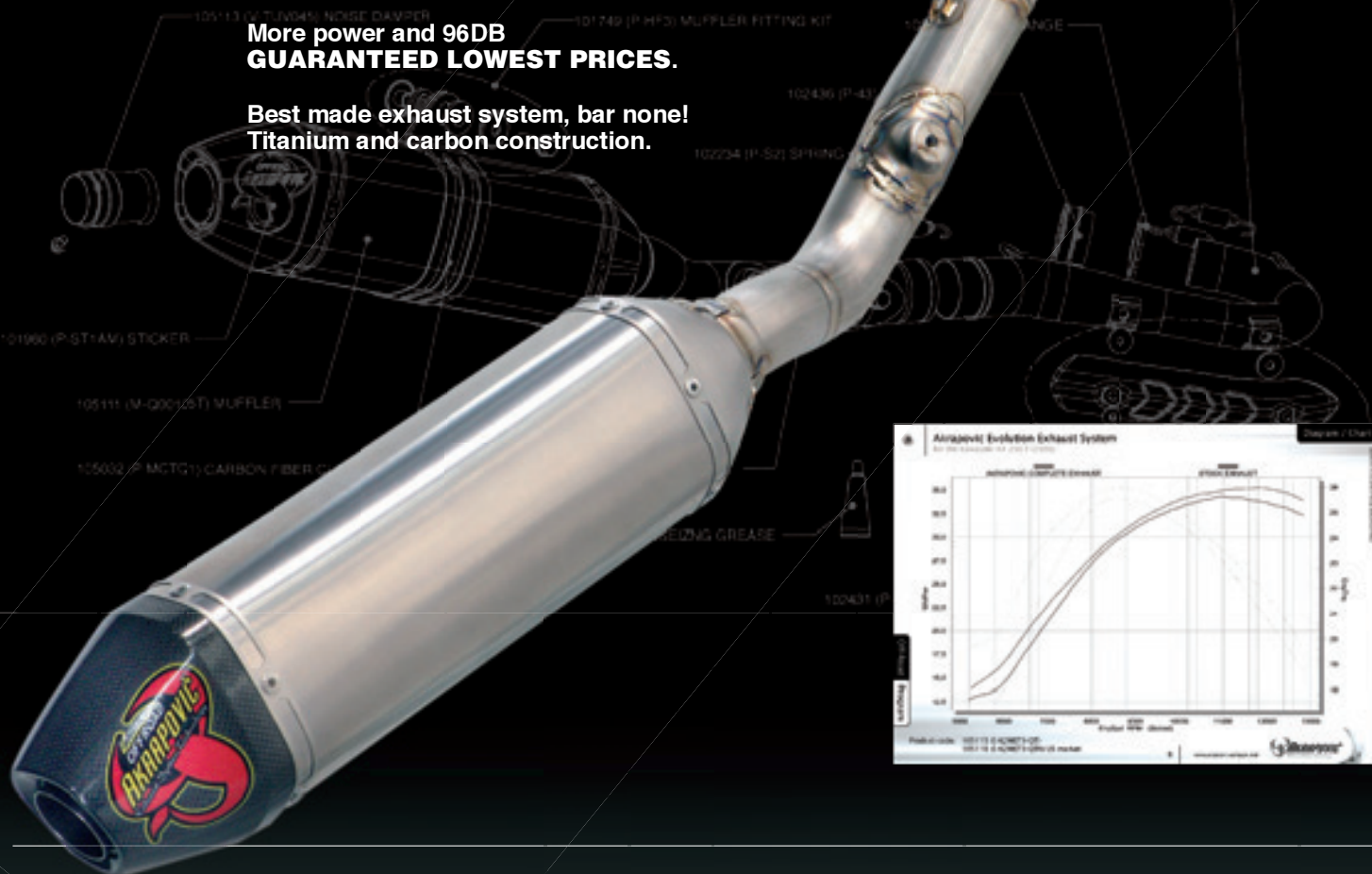


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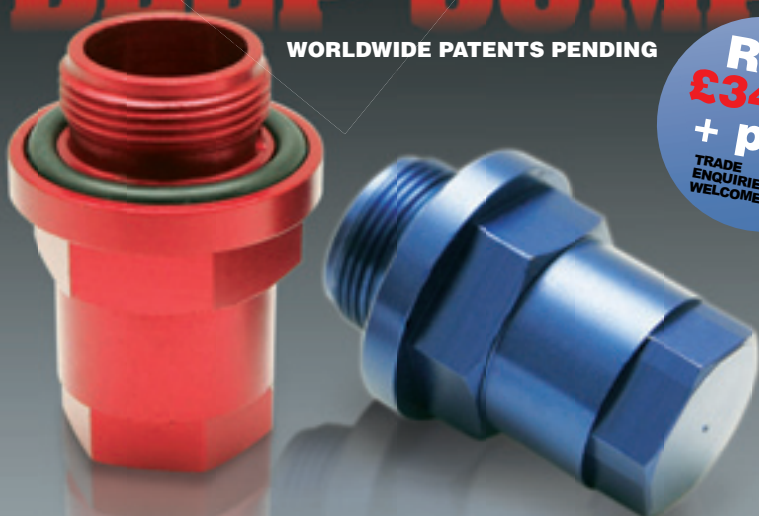
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Some people fall apart when they let their emotions take over but he can handle it and come back stronger. Look at the Nations – he crashed hard in the first moto but came back an hour later and posted the team's best score.

"He has a passion to succeed. He's a winner and winners want to win. You don't see that a lot in Europe – it's an American mentality. Tommy has made a bigger impact than either me or Maler at his age. You have to go back to Noyce and Thorpe to see anyone from Britain who has made the impact.

"When you work as hard as Tommy does and are willing to work, as he is, when you're willing to listen and learn, which I think he will because he has a good family who are all like that, when you have a good heart, then the sky's the limit.

"And you couldn't wish to meet a nicer kid. It doesn't matter who you are, whether you're the owner of Alpinestars or some kid who saved up his pocket money to get in, he's no different with anyone."

There were those who shook their heads

when Dobb took Searle to KTM, the firm which had so unceremoniously dropped him in the late summer of 2003. "At the end of the day it is business and the KTM deal was the best one for Tommy. There were certain things in the past but they're water under the bridge now.

"It was a tougher decision for Tommy to leave Molson. He's a very loyal person but he's dreamt about racing in America since he was a kid and the guaranteed opportunity was there with KTM. Time will tell if it's the right decision but for now it seems like it is."



Shock news!

Jamie quit racing ages ago!

"Every race I go to I still keep getting asked where I've been riding? Was I back in America? I don't worry about it but I just wish everybody realised I have retired. Next to Dave Thorpe (and Jeff Smith maybe? – Sully) I am the winningest rider from England – I won a world title, I did well in America but the British press didn't seem to care.

"I never had the best relationship with the British media. I know I made mistakes but I had my friends away from the track and racing was a job. Like now even, Sunday is a job and I put a hell of a lot into it. My dad always emphasised to me that you have to work hard at your job."

It was fairly late in James' career before he won his first GP and then the world title. What happened to make the difference?

"I was prepared! At the end of 2000 my wife Naomi said to me that I was not the rider that I had been when I came back from America. I said 'no' but then I watched videos and saw that she was right. I'd fallen into the European rider that races for 10 minutes, then sits back for 10 minutes and charges again at the end.

"We're not riding enduro, we're racing motocross. When the gate drops, you go as fast as you possibly

can. In MX2 now they race from start to finish – there's no sitting back – and in MX1 Josh and Stefan were racing for 40 minutes in Ireland but all those guys behind, well, the closest was two minutes back at the finish which says everything. And it is racing that people want to see.

"They don't want to watch a procession of guys following each other round. Stefan knew at the end of the year that Josh was back and now there were two guys who could race for 40 minutes. Look at qualifying on both sides of the Atlantic. Ricky Carmichael will set the same lap times in qualifying and the race. He and Stewart are out there racing – having fun!

"I prepared unbelievably well for 2001 and I knew two weeks before the first GP that I would be champion that year. My preparation was perfect. I was strong in body, strong in mind. I was having bets with my friends how far I was going to win by going into Spain. I just knew that even if someone was going to have a race with me, the confidence within was telling me the race was mine. Sportsmen do say that when they're in the zone – it's a strange feeling but there is no truer saying. Lots of people can race a motorcycle fast but Stefan has kept winning because he has prepared perfectly.

"It's not rocket science. Preparation. That's why Stefan and Ricky win every year. Today you can't manage without a trainer and you can't have it on a

piece of paper either. One day you may be flying, another you may not be feeling it and you have to do something else.

"Ricky is with his trainer from six in the morning till four in the afternoon, one-on-one. For me Ricky Carmichael is the best athlete on the planet, in any sport. He's won 10 outdoor titles in 10 years, never been beaten and he's only lost about six motos in the last five years.

"Stefan has done a fantastic job for the sport and has been a great ambassador too and hopefully youngsters like Tommy and Pourcel can take it to new levels."

So why did James' career come to such an abrupt end? "I realised that with the team and bike which I could get that I could not win another world title. It's human nature that when you have won the world title you don't want anything less. The water's under the bridge now. I've made my mistakes but I'm not one of these people who's going to go through life holding a grudge. By the time Kurt told me in Namur that KTM didn't need me it was too late to get another ride.

"When you have been champion you don't want to be racing for 10th and coming from one of the best teams in the paddock to go backwards is in nobody's interest. I couldn't put the work in to get to the top again, I knew I couldn't win and I wasn't there to make up the numbers."





GREEN DREAMS!

We test Christophe Pourcel's MX2 title-winning bike and Searle's tricked-out 250F back-to-back to see what makes these green meanies oh-so special

Words by Jonty Edmunds Photos by rayarcher.com

ASK MOST motocross enthusiasts what they think is needed from a bike if it's to perform successfully in the ultra-competitive world of MX2 GP racing and most will give the same answer – power. In a class where engine performance is king even the smallest of advantages make a big, big difference come the end of the race and more importantly the end of the championship.

But power alone isn't enough. To win a world championship reliability and consistency are both equally important. While all teams and riders are more than aware that to finish first you gotta finish, the line between peak performance, podium topping results and season-long reliability is a fine one... When the right machinery is mixed with a rider's raw speed, natural talent and good fortune world championships are won which is exactly what Frenchman Christophe Pourcel and Kawasaki achieved this season when they claimed the '06 MX2 world championship.

After finishing fifth in the '05 MX2 world championship two things were apparent to

Kawasaki and the GPKR team at the end of last season. Firstly, Christophe had what it took to win the MX2 championship. Secondly, if he was to stand any chance of winning he needed to start each and every race alongside reigning champion Antonio Cairoli and the rest of the class favourites and not get buried mid-pack during the opening laps as he often had during '05.

"Our main objective was to make the bike as easy to ride as possible because Christophe doesn't have a lot of muscles," explains Patrick Gelade, Grand Prix Kawasaki Racing team co-owner. "He has a very smooth riding style so we just tried to give him a bike that complimented that.

"During '05 we had a lot of problems at the start of races – Antonio Cairoli was always starting ahead which made things difficult for Christophe as he was always having to catch up during the beginning of the races. During last winter Christophe had just one request – that we build him a bike that had

a lot of low-end power while still strong on the top-end."

To obtain more bottom-end power the team focused much of their efforts on the cylinderhead intakes and fitted intake valves made from a different material to standard while also working on the crankshaft to remove all vibrations from the engine. The piston, con-rod and crank all remain standard with the engines then built 'properly and carefully'.

"We also worked a lot with the





Specifications

GPKR Kawasaki 250F

Engine modifications: Cylinder head

Piston: Vertex

Exhaust: Devil – titanium front pipe, Carbon Fibre silencer

Carburettor: Standard – bored out to 38.7mm

Crankshaft: Standard – balanced

Transmission: Standard – 5-speed

Ignition: Standard

Spark plug: NGK – colder than standard

Clutch basket: Hinson, standard plates

Lubricants: Motul

Fuel: Unleaded pump fuel

Flywheel weight: Standard

Front brake: Nissin master cylinder and caliper 260mm Moto Master disk

Rear brake: Nissin master cylinder and caliper Moto Master disk

Triple clamps: Ohlins – standard offset and rake

Bars: Pro Taper

Levers: Standard

Grips: Smith

Handguards: UFO

Fuel tank: Standard

Plastics: UFO

Air filter: Xrace on titanium Kawasaki factory cage

Radiators: Standard

Sump guard: ACD Racing

Chain: Regina

Chain guards: Standard

Sprockets: S-teel, 13/48

Rear wheel: Haan wheels hub, Excel rim

Front wheel: Haan wheels hub, Excel rim

Tyres: Bridgestone prototypes

Front suspension: 48mm USD Ohlins

Rear suspension: Ohlins 15mm shaft with high and low speed compression adjusters

Suspension linkage: Standard

Footpegs: Standard

Graphics: Ace Graphics

Seat: Standard with new foam every two GPs

Start device: Moto Evasion



standard carburettor," adds Patrick. "Normally the opening inside a carburettor is round but we modified ours so that they are more oval now – the bore is the same as standard in the bottom but bigger on the top which gives the engine more power on the top-end. The work has been very successful and Christophe now has a bike that he is really happy with."

The most obvious change between a standard 250F Kawasaki and Christophe's bike is the use of factory supplied Ohlins suspension. Using 48mm USD Ohlins forks and a factory Ohlins shock, despite being a featherweight racer the younger of the two Pourcel brothers likes to have the rear-end of his bike jacked up quite high.

With the bike fitted with the distinctive Devil exhaust system, his trademark green vented UFO handguards, green Haan hubs and grey Hinson clutch cover the one thing that really sets Christophe's bike apart from his brother's and all others in the MX2 world championship is the way he likes to have his steering set-up.

"One thing that is very different about Christophe's bike is something you can't see," explains Patrick. "He likes to have his steering extremely tight. Most normal riders can't ride his bike because the steering is so tight. The reason he has it like that is so that when the track is really rough the bike remains stable – the steering doesn't shake from side to side. Remember he's not so strong so it takes less energy to keep the steering straight the way he has it."

"Christophe is pretty demanding and knows what he likes. We have to have a lot of



discussion before we try something new because he doesn't like change. He is really sure that the way he has his bikes set-up is the right way and the best set-up. He has tried a lot of bikes and always comes back to his set-up. He is very sensitive to change.

"His bike works extremely well now although it is not as special as you might think. We use many standard parts and work hard to get the best from the engine. As Christophe and the team have shown reliability is extremely important."

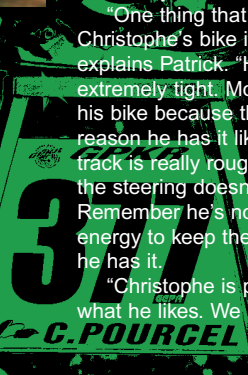
Riding Christophe's world championship winning bike wasn't quite as I was expecting. Thinking that his bike would have much improved top-end power, probably at the expense of easy to use bottom-end performance – Antonio Cairoli's Yamaha was exactly that way – it was in fact the lack of any noticeable increase in top-end performance over standard that was the bike's most surprising trait.

But the first thing to strike me was the surprisingly high and open handlebar set-up used by Christophe. Feeling as if it were set-up

for a rider much taller than he is, with his bars somehow feeling wider than normal and positioned in such a way that they felt much higher than standard, the bike had an amazing amount of leg room which made cornering noticeably hassle free and encouraged standing up.

But while the open cockpit made it easy to move forwards and backwards while entering and exiting turns his liking of incredibly tight steering made the bike extremely hard to ride. Almost impossible to feel confident turning at slow speeds and when jumping, the fact that the steering felt at times like it was locked solid was unnerving to say the least.

Loosened for the test compared to how he normally has it set but still unbelievably tight, when riding slowly during my sighting lap I struggled to get the bike to turn at all, instead having to lean rather than turn due to the tight steering. Then, when jumping, I came close to crashing at least half-a-dozen times due to seemingly not being able to adjust the





direction of the bike by turning the steering. Only when riding at speed did I feel like the bike was steering freely and that it wasn't going to do anything unexpected.

Despite Christophe's liking for incredibly tight steering making his bike a little harder to ride compared to most 'normal' steering set ups it didn't take long to feel at home on the bike due to the fact that the power characteristics weren't too dissimilar to a production 250F. Having expected increased top-end performance to have affected the bike's ease of use, I found only marginally more top-end power with the bike possessing an incredibly usable spread of power from bottom to top. Rev the bike hard and like on a standard 250F there was a very definite point at which the bike stopped producing its power.

With the bike having next to no over-rev – something that was a big surprise – simply holding onto a gear too long resulted in a loss of maximum power. On the flip side the engine could be laboured in a low gear without problems which made it easy to roll the power on and off without using the clutch.

Producing strong, usable power from the minute the throttle was turned, the curve of the power remained constant from bottom-to-top with no drop off in performance anywhere along the way. With the carburetion faultless, the motor's power was not only easy to use but also encouraged the use of bigger gears and lower revs. Not what I was expecting from an MX2 world championship-winning bike.

With the bike happy to be ridden lazily after only a few laps it was easy to see how the motor's smooth, strong power matches itself perfectly with Christophe's smooth riding style.

In setting out to build Christophe a bike that is above all else easy to use the GPKR team certainly haven't built the world's quickest 250F – far from it in fact. What they have built however is a bike fitted with a very strong and very easy to use motor which is exactly what Christophe wanted. Far from eye-wateringly

fast, although by no means underpowered, instead of producing noticeably improved top-end performance the bike has an incredibly useable spread of power that is slightly stronger but in many ways similar to that of a standard 250F Kawasaki.

With little over-rev I'd guess that the bike's power stops no more than a couple of hundred rpm higher than it does on a standard KXF which was a surprise for a GP bike and resulted in over-revving achieving absolutely nothing. But the strength of the bike's power and the fact that revs could be dropped low without needing to abuse the clutch to bring them up again was impressive. Allowing third gear to be used in second gear turns, while a quick succession of gear changes was needed when accelerating out of corners the fact that a gear higher could be used when entering turns often made the bike feel more like it was fitted with a 280cc motor.

As for the steering and suspension set-up, well, that was just weird. The forks and shock certainly didn't do anything out of the ordinary but with the steering so tight the bike felt at times like it had a flat front tyre and didn't want to turn, which meant it was hard to feel 100 per cent settled with Christophe's very personalised set-up.

Proving that vastly improved top-end performance isn't necessarily needed to win an MX2 world championship, Christophe's #377 machine is a bike that any level of rider would find easy to use.



Tommy's rocket!

The 411 on the #101 Molson Kawasaki

Out on the track there aren't too many noticeable differences between the performance of Christophe Pourcel's MX2 winning bike and Tommy Searle's Molson Kawasaki Racing 250F which, given that both riders are of a similar build but have contrasting riding styles, is both a little unexpected while at the same time unsurprising.

Aiming to give Tommy engines with a similar power curve to standard, just with more power the whole way through the rev range, the Molson team fit different cams – either Pro Circuit or modified stock items – and use stronger valves, an after-market piston, modify the carburettor and crank and fit an Akrapovic exhaust system while at the same time paying close attention to the way the motor is pieced together. Retaining a standard ignition the bike revs to 13,500 RPM which is the same as standard with the only other notable modification being the fitting of '05 clutch plates with Hinson baskets.

As with Pourcel's bike it is the strong spread of power and not a noticeable improvement in top-end performance that is most apparent. With Tommy's motor building revs a little easier than Christophe's the power from both engines started and finished in more or less the same place as on a standard KXF with the power coming to a very definite end. With no over-rev the bike constantly needed to be up-shifted as over-revving resulted in a noticeable drop off in power.

Despite both Christophe and Tommy's bikes having a strong spread of power from bottom-to-top they refused to start in second gear, needing to be in first gear before then immediately being shifted into second. The inability to rev the bike for any great length of time in any given gear meant that I was still changing up two thirds of the way down the start straight when I felt I should have been able to rev the bike out in either third or fourth gear.

The manoeuvrability of Tommy's bike and the way that the KYB suspension soaked up all manner of bumps was highly impressive and more confidence inspiring than on Christophe's. And added to steering that thankfully wasn't ridiculously tight the bike felt much easier to move around and change direction on compared to Christophe's. Stable, quick turning and with responsive controls but not overly-powerful brakes Tommy's bike was every bit as easy to ride as the GPKR bike despite having a noticeably more cramped cockpit.

Specifications

Molson Kawasaki KX250F

Engine modifications: Cylinder head and piston

Piston: SRS

Exhaust: Akrapovic – titanium front pipe and silencer

Carburettor: Standard, modified internal dimensions

Crankshaft: Standard – balanced

Transmission: Standard – 5-speed

Ignition: Standard

Spark plug: NGK

Clutch basket: Hinson using standard '05 plates

Lubricants: Motorex

Fuel: Unleaded pump fuel

Flywheel weight: Standard

Front brake: Nissin master cylinder and caliper, 260mm Moto Master disk, DP pads

Rear brake: Nissin master cylinder and caliper, 240mm Moto Master disk DP pads

Triple clamps: DL Concepts

Bars: Renthal 997

Lever: Sunline ARC

Grips: Renthal 50/50

Handguards: Polisport

Fuel Tank: Standard – oversized optional

Plastics/bodywork: Polisport

Air Filter: Twin Air on Twin Air cage

Radiators: GMX oversized

Sump guard: Light Speed

Chain: DID

Chain guards: Light Speed

Sprockets: Renthal, 13/48

Rear Wheel: Haan wheels hub, DID rims

Front Wheel: Haan wheels hub, DID rims

Tyres: Michelin plus mousses

Front suspension: KYB USD 48mm 'B' kit

Rear suspension: KYB 'B' kit 18mm shaft high and low speed compression adjustment

Suspension linkage: Standard

Foot pegs: Sunline

Graphics: N-Style

Seat: Standard base with harder foam and N-Style cover

Start device: DL Concept



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TOP LINE UP FOR BELFAST SUPERCROSS

THIS YEAR'S SIXTH ANNUAL BELFAST INTERNATIONAL SUPERCROSS IS SET TO BE ONE OF THE MOST HOTLY CONTESTED EUROPEAN INDOOR EVENTS OF THE YEAR.

WITH THE USA's Mike Brown headlining the start list ahead of 2004 Belfast champ Jean Sebastian Roy (CAN) and Northern Irish golden-boy Gordon Crookard, making his debut on the CAS Honda will be a tough challenge for the returning former AMA Nats 125cc MX champion. Alongside Brown, his support from the US comes in the shape of AMA SX regular Erick Vallejo and So Be/Samsung Honda's Jake Weimer. Vallejo is no stranger to Main Event action as he's regularly hitting the top 10 in the world's premier class of SX – the Amp'd Mobile AMA Supercross Series. At the tender age of 18, Weimer also makes his debut in Europe and is one of the talents being touted to hit the big time back home.

The USA's Jacob Saylor and former Emberson Yamaha pilot Jeff Dement are no strangers to the Odyssey having both ridden once at the season-ending event – Dement lifting the Odyssey title in 2002. Other new faces to the spectacular Northern Ireland venue are little known but spectacularly fast Canadian Kyle

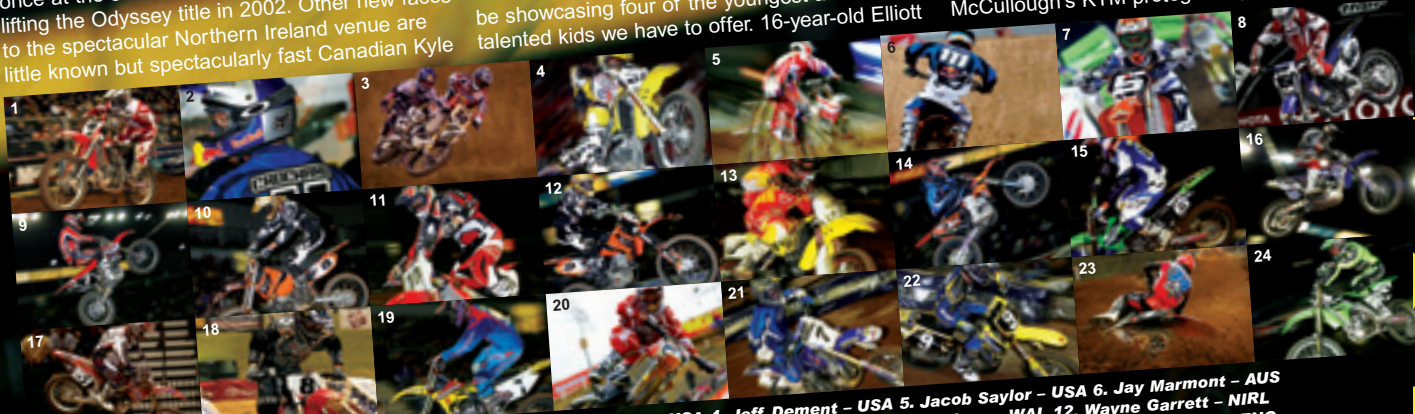
Keast and the infamous Marmont brothers from Australia. Both Ryan and Jay are current Australian champions and both having spent time racing the US and Australian SX series will no doubt bring their raw speed to the front of the pack.

British hopes lay in the hands of GP winners Billy MacKenzie and Carl Nunn – both on their day are incredibly fast and more than capable of lifting the Odyssey Title. 2006 teenage sensation Tommy Searle will be making his debut aboard the brand new factory KTM as he starts his challenge to continue his scintillating rise to fame. Current four-stroke and KWS champ Brad Anderson will be working as hard as always to bring home glory to the London-based Pioneer Yamaha team and there's no doubt the 'double-hard' North East rider will be giving it 100 per cent.

Young talent is always key to a great event and this year's Belfast Supercross sell-out will be showcasing four of the youngest and most talented kids we have to offer. 16-year-old Elliott

Banks Browne starts aboard the brand new 2007 Suzuki 250F alongside current MotoVision Suzuki pilot, South African Neville Bradshaw. Current youth champion Ashley Greedy will switch from Team Green Kawasaki to the PAR Honda race team to fight for his place in the hotly contested Supercross Lites class. But it's current US expat Adam Chatfield that may just rock the boat as he makes his Belfast debut as a seasoned campaigner of the US indoor and outdoor series – watch out for this kid, he's fast!

Former national number two Wayne Smith returns to Belfast only this time moving up to the strong Supercross class ahead of local multiple Ulster Champions Philip McCullough, Adam Lyons and talented 2005 podium man Martin Barr. CAS Honda team boss Neil Prince will not only be keeping a trackside view on his current team leader Mike Brown, the 1994 British champion and former supercross champ aims to mix it on the track as well. Rounding out the Northern Irish challenge will be Philip McCullough's KTM protégé Wayne Garrett.



1. Jean Sebastian Roy – CAN 2. Gordon Crookard – NIRL 3. Erick Vallejo – USA 4. Jeff Dement – USA 5. Jacob Saylor – USA 6. Jay Marmont – AUS 7. Ryan Marmont – AUS 8. Kyle Keast – CAN 9. Wayne Smith – ENG 10. Philip McCullough – NIRL 11. Neil Prince – WAL 12. Wayne Garrett – NIRL 13. Mike Brown – USA 14. Carl Nunn – ENG 15. Tommy Searle – ENG 16. Billy MacKenzie – SCO 17. Jake Weimer – USA 18. Adam Chatfield – ENG 19. Neville Bradshaw – RSA 20. Brad Anderson – ENG 21. Martin Barr – NIRL 22. Adam Lyons – NIRL 23. Elliott Banks-Browne – ENG 24. Ashley Greedy – WAL

SHANE LYNCH - BOYZONE STAR HEADS THE MINI BIKE INVITATIONAL.

Former Boy Zone band member Shane Lynch will be racing at the Odyssey in the Pro/Celeb Mini Bike Invitational. This summer's Love Island star (totally admired for giving Sophie Anderton the cold-shoulder!) is no stranger to the race track and can't wait to get stuck in. "The supercross in Belfast is a really great event, something I've wanted to be at for years...only I didn't expect to be taking to the track myself. Matt's put a great list of people together for what should be a real spectacle," explains Lynch.

Ten celebs will be teamed up with 10 current and former motocross and road race stars. Jamie Dobb and Emmerdale star Kelvin Fletcher go head to head against Coronation Street's Ryan Thomas (the one that goes out with the very fit bird!) and the cute one that owns the dog called Schmichael and Sully from DBR. Former British championship contender and now editor of MOTO magazine Jeff Perrett will be

teamed with Shane Lynch. Road race legends Leon Haslam, Jonathan Rae, Michael Laverty, Eugene Laverty and Jeremy McWilliams will all be aiming to prove their worth on the dirt – should be great to watch!



Shane Lynch

FREESTYLE ROCKS THE ODYSSEY - UKFMX



Gary Taylor, UKFMX

Arguably the best Freestyle MX rider the UK has ever produced, Gary Taylor and his crew of bad boys are returning to the Odyssey to once again wow the audience with their explosive freestyle action. Kris Brock, Dave Wiggins and Danny Veale will be joining Taylor in what will be an amazing part of the 'back-flip' filled show.

"I've been to the Odyssey Supercross pretty much every year since 2001 but last year was just in another league. With both Kris and I pulling combo back-flips in every event, I just know this crowd will bring the roof down – if you've never been before it's hard to believe just how noisy the audience get," says Gary.

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STEFAN'S STEED!

When the chance to test Stefan Everts' number 72 machine – the bike that carried him to his 10th world title, his 101st GP victory and the MX des Nations overall – comes along you don't pass it up

Words by Jonty Edmunds Photos by Massimo Zanzani

IF THERE is one bike that's had a greater impact on the FIM world MX championships than any other during the new millennium it's the #72 Yamaha of Stefan Everts.

Okay, it's not actually one bike – Stefan has won on no fewer than six different Yamahas since '01 – but by virtue of the fact that a #72 Yamaha has won two 500cc world championships, a MXGP crown and three MX1 world titles means that Everts and his blue steed have become the most recognisable – and most successful – pairing of all time.

While Everts' '01 and '02 500cc machines were technically the most interesting of all his

Yamaha bikes – featuring among other things special pre-production aluminium frames, extended swingarms and hydraulic clutches – his '06 bike is the one that marks the end of an era in world MX. Bringing to a close the hugely successful Everts/Rinaldi Yamaha partnership, Stefan's Intur Sports YZ450FM is the machine that carried him to an unprecedented 10th world title and his 101st GP win. And that makes it an extremely special bike.

But what is interesting about Stefan's six years with Yamaha is the fact that as he's gone from simply winning world championships to dominating them his bikes have become more

and more production based. With his '01 world championship winning bike in many ways night and day different to the production Yamaha available five years ago, by contrast his '06 YZ450F is the closest to a production bike of any of his four world championship winning 450s.

Stefan's Yamahas, both in years past and today, are built with a very definite emphasis put on simplicity and attention to detail and – a little more surprising given that he is Yamaha's #1 GP rider – affordability. His '06 bike has been built, like all of his Yamahas, to be as light as possible, provide smooth, strong bottom-end

Jonty hammers Everts' factory Yam out of a right-hander



power while being reliable and as easy to manoeuvre as possible. While his '06 race bike has a beauty all of its own the function of the mechanical parts – its engine, suspension and numerous other moving parts – is the team's primary concern.

Strip away the Intur Sports team graphics and Acerbis plastics and what lies beneath is a purely functional motorcycle built to perform at the highest level. There are no unnecessarily fancy parts, no hint of an outlandish colour scheme and no complicated or unnecessary systems, switches or panels. Instead the bike is an out and out race winning machine that's a

lot closer to a standard YZ450 than you might imagine.

It's pretty much a case of what you see you get with Stefan's Yamaha – a production-based YZ450 with factory supplied KYB suspension fitted with numerous weight-saving carbon fibre parts, an aftermarket exhaust system, funky brakes, black rims and a motor dressed with machined aluminium parts. That doesn't quite seem enough when talking about the bike ridden by a rider who has 10 world titles to his name but it's the truth. The bike does have some money-can't-buy parts but the bike isn't as mechanically special as you might think.

While the exact details of Stefan's race engines remain a closely guarded secret of the Rinaldi Yamaha team, fairly major modifications have been made to six specific areas. The bike features an YRRD (Yamaha Rinaldi R&D) crankshaft, cylinderhead modifications, exhaust and inlet valves, camshaft, revised ignition and an Arrow exhaust system. Although the team acknowledge the fact that the modifications aren't dissimilar to those made in previous years – if it ain't broke why fix it? – they also admit that it does build its power quicker than in '05 with a stronger bottom to mid-range.

With the main 'innovations' for the '06



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production YZ450F being a five-speed gearbox and a new engine which has been mated with a new aluminium frame with changed geometry, the Rinaldi team are keen to point out that they were working with an extremely competitive base product. Manipulating the motor to produce slightly more power than standard throughout the rev range, they also produced more torque with long gearing to match Stefan's smooth style.

With the motor breathed on by the Rinaldi team in such a way as to provide Stefan with his required power characteristics, saving weight was also key to the Rinaldi staff. With the bike littered with titanium fasteners and carbon fibre parts, the one-piece carbon fibre airbox and subframe almost goes unnoticed. Retaining a standard chassis and swingarm, the bike does have a revised linkage which lowers the rear end of the bike.

Giving Everts the plush, progressive

suspension that has become as much one of his peculiarities as high lever positioning or super smooth motors, a set of 50mm factory-supplied, Technical Touch-serviced KYB forks take care of the all important front end of Stefan's bike while at the rear a factory KYB shock assists the damping. With Everts ultra-critical about the way he likes his forks to work due to his stood on the pegs, weight over the front riding style, the suppleness of the forks is more than a little surprising.

Finally, Italian Brembo brakes are added to take care of the stopping duties at the front of the bike. With a radical caliper mounted directly to the rear of the lower left KYB fork the front brake offers a stronger action while Brembo and Nissin components are mixed at the rear.

Just sitting on Stefan's bike I felt special. No surprise really – the bike I was gently lowering the levers on was the exact same bike that Everts had used to beat James Stewart during

this year's MX des Nations just a few weeks previously.

After a few warm-up laps on the hard, dry and one-lined Faenza test track I decided to begin the test where Stefan would a race – at the start.

With the bike having 60bhp starting proved interesting. No, that's a lie, it proved difficult. With short-lived visions of the bike catapulting me with ease down the start straight I tried in vain to keep the front wheel on the ground and aborted no fewer than eight starts before figuring out what was needed to set-off without looking like a complete beginner.

Trying to drive smoothly away from the start by letting the clutch out steadily – and failing to do so – I then opted to try burying the throttle in the hope of controlling the take off with a spinning rear wheel. Only that didn't work either. Finally I cracked it! Having tried to keep my upper body forward while setting off I



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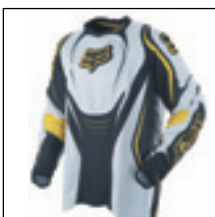
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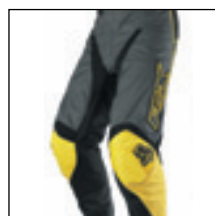
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figured out that nothing short of kissing the front number plate would keep the front wheel on the ground. Not just initially as I gently released the clutch but until I was halfway down the start straight or at least until I was in fourth gear – or whichever came first.

Once I started to do that, letting the 60bhp drive me forward at an alarming rate, I finally got the hang of starting like Stefan. Well, almost...

Out on the track the bike feels every bit the GP winning machine it is. Having lowered the awkwardly high levers the strangely powerful yet eerily easy to use motor instantly filled me with confidence while almost masking the fact that it is producing 60bhp.

Easier to ride than a standard YZ450, Stefan's YZ450FM disguises its power very well. Putting out around seven bhp more than a standard YZ450 the enormous amount of power remained extremely usable and lap after

lap the bike felt easier and easier to use. Almost unnoticeably smooth when changing up while keeping the power in the mid-range, it was easy to see how Stefan's smooth riding style and the bike's smooth power compliment each other to deliver devastating results.

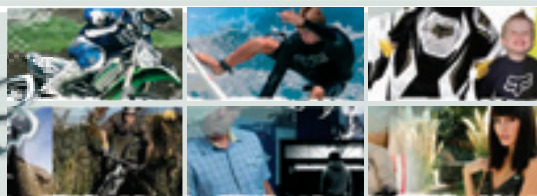
The power produced by Stefan's bike is all about progression and strength. While anything but frightening to use it is incredibly strong and seemingly goes on and on and on. With the strength of the motor allowing the power to simply be rolled on and off at leisure, allowing the revs to drop is no problem as the low-end power builds extremely quickly offering fantastic acceleration.

Driving controllably but forcefully out of and around corners, Stefan's bike is also easy to use in both high speed and stop-and-go turns. Possibly a littler harder to manoeuvre around tight turns in comparison to his '05 bike due to the fact that the bike builds its power quicker

than it did last season, it nonetheless felt extremely well planted and always predictable.

Along with a motor with more low-end punch Everts '06 bike has slightly firmer feeling suspension than his '05 bike. As soft and supple in the initial part of the forks' and shock's stroke the front and rear dampers firm up quickly but almost unnoticeably. Offering a hugely forgiving ride, the action of the suspension doesn't feel as soft on track as it does at a standstill but the plushness of the factory KYB units ensure that the Pirelli tyres seemingly never once failed to provide traction, even out of slippery, off-cambered turns.

Dealing with big braking and acceleration bumps with ease, only the nastiest of square-edged holes had any effect on the general handling of the bike. And the fact that the bike goes over pretty much anything you put in front of it is both very impressive and confidence inspiring.



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Judge Jonty So Special

There's no doubt that the world of GP motocross won't be the same without the #72 Yamaha of Stefan Everts. And there is no doubt that Stefan Everts '06 YZ450FM is a very special bike. While not quite as special in terms of exotic parts as some bikes in the MX1 class, the thing that really makes the bike shine

is simply that it is the last bike ever to carry the most successful world championship motocross rider of all time.

Yes it has unbelievably smooth power and yes it has suspension so supple it would blow the minds of most GP racers but more importantly than that is the simple fact that it was Stefan's bike. A bike that looks as well as it performs and a bike that will be remembered for a long, long time to come.

Yamaha YZ450FM

Engine

Modifications: Modified cylinderhead, crank, cams, inlet and exhaust valves
Piston: Standard
Exhaust: Arrow, titanium
Carburettor: Keihin FCR 39mm, jetting changes
Crankshaft: Modified
Transmission: Standard
Ignition: YRRD CDI
Spark plug: Champion
Clutch basket: Standard
Flywheel weight: Standard

Chassis

Front brake: Brembo, four-piston radial caliper with Brembo master cylinder, Braking 270mm floating 'butterfly' disk
Rear brake: Brembo master cylinder with Nissin caliper, Braking 255mm disk, Rinaldi Racing brake pedal
Triple clamps: CNC machined billet aluminium
Bars: Tommi, Everts' bend
Lever: Works Connection clutch perch
Grips: Ariete
Handguards: Acerbis
Fuel tank: Carbon fibre, eight litres
Plastics/bodywork: Acerbis
Air filter: Twin Air
Radiators: Made to team's specifications
Sump guard: Carbon fibre
Chain: Regina
Chainguards: Carbon fibre
Sprockets: Afam, 14/53
Rear wheel: 19ins standard hub, Excel rim
Front wheel: 21ins standard hub, Excel rim
Tyres: Pirelli with mousse

Suspension

Forks: Factory KYB, USD 50mm
Shock: Factory KYB, 18mm shaft, titanium spring, high and low speed compression adjusters
Suspension linkage: Modified, lowers rear end
Foot pegs: Titanium oversized, plus titanium mounts
Graphics: Tecnosel
Seat: Tecnosel, lower and harder foam
Start device: Rinaldi Yamaha
Extras: Carbon fibre subframe/airbox, titanium and aluminium fasteners



Break it, pay for it!
Jonty risks missing a mortgage repayment in his quest to push the #72 Yamaha to the limit

HEIR TO THE THRONE?

Many pundits reckon that James Dabill's the next British big thing in world trials – DBR delve deeper...

Words and photos by g2f.co.uk

HAVING ALREADY captured the 2005 World Junior championship and the 2006 European title – not to mention finishing ninth overall in the world championship proper at his first attempt – James Dabill is tipped by many as perhaps Britain's best hope of replacing Dougie Lampkin at the top of the world trials rankings.

With this season all but at a close and with James having already started his winter training for his 2007 assault, DBR caught up with the likeable trials rider from Leeds to get his thoughts on his career to date...

Looking across the T1 departure lounge at Manchester Airport it's hard to distinguish the potential future world champion as he sits among the many other travellers who are slouched over the rows of worn and uncomfortable seats.

Wearing a hooded top and deeply engrossed in playing Grand Theft Auto on his PSP, James could be just another youngster making a packaged pilgrimage to a not so distant destination.

However, in reality this initial impression hides the real personality and the purpose of the imminent trip. Dabill is sat alongside multi world champion Dougie Lampkin and the Yorkshire pairing are off to France to represent Queen and Country at the Trial des Nations where they'll be joined by Graham Jarvis and Shaun Morris. Despite being at opposite ends of their sporting careers the pair have formed a growing friendship based on mutual respect.

James holds Dougie in the highest esteem. "You can't get a better role model than Dougie," reckons James. "He is and has been a great inspiration to young riders from all over the world for the last decade. To be at the top as long as he has takes incredible determination

and dedication and the fact that he's still hungry for success now shows just how much he still puts into his riding. I certainly have learnt a lot from him. When I was younger he was my hero and while he remains the rider I most look up to he has also become a very valued friend.

"To spend time in his company both on and off the bike is priceless and I can only be thankful that he has taken an interest in me – I just hope he can continue to help me in the future as to be world champion you need a good team around you."

Like most Lampkins Dougie does not suffer fools so he must have seen something of interest in Dabill to have invited him to spend a week with him during a recent training trip to Spain. "James has become a bit of favourite with my mum and dad," says Dougie. "He was so polite and helpful when he lived with us in Barcelona. He has manners and respect which are important ingredients when it comes to sport. I have watched James' progress for a number of years now and there is definitely something there. When we practice together he rides really well, he now just needs to repeat that on a consistent basis at competitions but I am sure that will come if he continues to work hard."

Joining James on this trip are his parents Cherry and Mal plus long-term girlfriend Emma. While all three are loyal supporters of his recent campaigns it's his mum and dad who've been his backbone right from those early schoolboy days. One of three children, James has a younger brother and elder sister and both have done their fair share of trials riding but now they've left James to fly the team Dabill flag alone.

The family showed its immense and





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ongoing support for James back in the summer when lightning struck and burnt down the Dabill home. James was competing abroad at the time but the whole incident was played down so as not to disturb his preparations. It was only a few weeks later when he returned to Leeds he discovered that his family were living in rented accommodation having lost almost everything they'd ever owned.

With the exception of the A Class in which he finished as runner-up, James won every other British youth championship as he shifted from a Yamaha TY80 through to a 125 Gas Gas. En route Dabill gained the unofficial tag of being the youngest ever factory supported trials rider when Spanish manufacturer Mecatecno hand-built an 80cc bike especially for the young tyke.

Continuing to be funded by his parents, James made the transition to the adult ranks where he netted second place in the British

Masters series in his first full year followed by seventh in the main championship class 12 months later.

James' progress didn't go unnoticed and he was quickly signed up by the Italian-based Top Trials Team which runs as a satellite squad to the official Beta factory team. This deal not only gave Dabill semi-works bikes but also provided him with a proper support team headed up by none other than Lampkin's old Beta chief engineer Riccardo Bosi.

The Anglo-Italian set-up was soon to reap the full rewards of all the team's efforts with James giving the Top Trial Team their first ever world title as he took the 2005 Junior crown in some style – the then 19-year-old wrapping up the championship with rounds to spare.

With the Junior crown in the bag Dabill allowed himself one moment of glory by riding his home GP at Hawkstone Park in the same category to round out this part of his

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career with a win in front of 8,000 British fans before making the step up to the World class for the final two rounds of the 2005 season.

Those that predicted that James would struggle to make the step to competing with the world's best were soon silenced when he put in three point scoring rides including a 10th place at the last round in Belgium.

Expectations for Dabill's first full season in the main class were high after his strong finish to 2005 but despite the surrounding hype James made public the goals that he had set himself right from the outset. "Winning the European championship, finishing in the top 10 in the world and in the top three of the British championship are my main goals for 2006."

James started the year well with a close second behind reigning and eventual domestic champion Graham Jarvis at the opening round of the home-based series. However, this was to be Dabill's best result on the home front as inconsistent results and the lack of a permanent minder meant that he would finally finish in fourth place after a disappointing campaign. This would be the only goal that

James would fail to achieve this season.

Perhaps the pressure of being the favourite to lift the Euro title sat too heavily on James' still relatively young shoulders at the initial round as a stupid and unforced mistake cost him a win that was his for the taking. This gave his main rival Jerome Bethune the early advantage and taught Dabill a valuable lesson in pressure management.

A win at round two put his title hopes back on track before his world was to fall apart during the mid-season with an inexcusable seventh place in France and an unlucky sixth position at the Italian round to leave James trailing Bethune by four points with just two rounds remaining.

His second victory of the campaign at the penultimate event in Poland put him back in the driving seat but with only a single point lead the pressure was back with Dabill going to the showdown in the Czech Republic. Learning from earlier in the year James showed great maturity and took the title after winning what was a tense final round where Bethune cracked in the heat and finished in sixth place.

At world level James opened his account with a slightly nervous 11th position at the first GP in Spain but bounced back brilliantly with a career-best seventh place in Portugal before reinforcing his assault with two equally excellent eighth spots at the American double-header.

Japan would prove to be a disaster for Dabill with the team arriving late in the Far East and only just making it through technical control. An ill-prepared 12th and 14th places here would prove costly at the end of the season with James losing out on eighth in the championship by just three points to the more experienced Polish rider Tadeusz Blazusiak, despite not finishing outside the top 10 in all the remaining GPs.

Having met all but one of the goals he set this year what does 2007 hold for James? "My main aim is to try and finish in the top six in the world championship – that's a massive ask but one I am happy to take on. On the home front I need to be more consistent and give Graham a real run for the British title. Other than that I just want to be happy and to get back into our home once it has been rebuilt."





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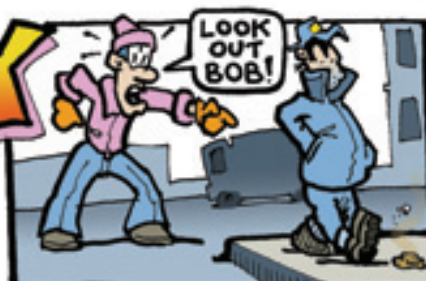


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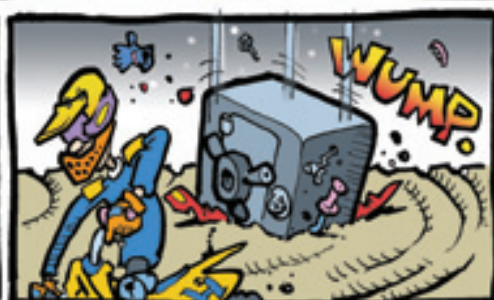
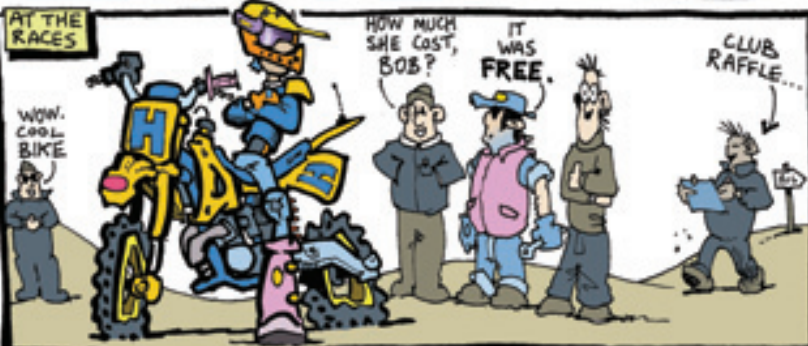
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**He may not be the sweetest stylist on the track
but what Pioneer Yamaha's Brad Anderson
lacks in looks he makes up for with a
single-minded drive and determination**

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Suttly

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Brad leads GP regular
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"Ere, what you 'avin' a butcher's at?"
Team boss Embo rates Brad highly

Ando's Idols From Austin to Everts...

"My favourite riders when I was young were Austin Kemp – he was a good rider but he couldn't afford it – and also Tony Marshall. They were the boys I was looking up to when I was in the schoolboys.

"But the person I really look up to is Everts, he's unbeatable. It's his last year and he's given it all what for winning all them races. If he needs to give it more he's got more to give. If he's far behind he just pushes harder and he gets to the front. The Yanks are fast and Everts is fast but the Yanks are on the edge and I reckon Everts has more. It's hard to say – it would've been good to see him race Carmichael [at the MXdN] if Carmichael hadn't been injured."

THROTTLE PINNED wide-open, elbows tucked in by his sides, legs trailing – on the track Brad Anderson is instantly recognisable. But while he may not be the most graceful rider out there, with Brad it's definitely a case of substance over style and even if it ain't that pretty to look at it's brutally effective.

This year the North Easterner retained the British Four-Stroke Championship and finished out the full Maxxis domestic series a clear fourth behind Carl Nunn, Tommy Searle and Billy MacKenzie – all riders in the world top 10 who benefit from picking their pace up during a full GP campaign.

"This season's been my best season so far since I've been riding and I need to say a big thanks to Roy Emberson, Pioneer Yamaha and my mechanics for doing a good job," reckons Brad. "Mike Foster's my mechanic during the week and my mechanic on the weekend is Tim Mace who works at Bikesport Newcastle. Altogether it's one big package that works so good and has helped me have such a good year."

Seeing as Brad's brought him up, now's as good a time as any to bring in Roy Emberson – aka Embo. Brad's larger-than-life team boss is well known for his love of riders who give nothing short of 100 per cent – and the

25-year-old from Tow Law in County Durham certainly fits the bill.

"He's a good boy, a very good boy," says Embo. "He's very self-motivated and always up for it. He gives me 110 per cent. He's a racer and it's a pity there's not more like him. He used to be very aggressive but he's calmed down and rides with his head a lot more. This will be our third year together – I wish I could find another one of him."

The relationship works both ways and it's obvious that Brad's thriving on the Pioneer Yamaha team with such a down-to-earth guv'nor. "It's very straightforward between me and Roy – he's the b*****s as he would say," grins Brad. "If there's anything wrong I get on the phone and tell him and if he's got anything to tell me he says it straight to my face. That's the way we both work and that's why we get on so well."

Anyway, enough of the mutual appreciation – what we need now is evidence to back up the image of Brad as the rider who doesn't know how to quit and, as luck would have it, '06 seems to have been a perfect season to illustrate this.

The standard of racing in the British four-stroke series is just about as high as it gets in this country – it's basically a full-on national

championship for riders who don't do a complete season of GPs. And with the likes of Mark Jones and Wayne Smith to contend with, winning the title – let alone successfully defending it – requires some serious speed and cast iron determination.

"I've retained my four-stroke championship but it hasn't been easy," says Brad. "I went to the first round and it was really muddy and we only got one race in but I won that so I was pretty pleased. But I broke my hand which I didn't feel at the time. The next week we had a British championship at Wakes Colne and I was struggling to do the jumps and stuff like that so I just gritted my teeth and tried to score as many points as I could. I think I got eighth which wasn't too bad for having a broken hand.

"The next four-stroke round I had a disaster. On the last lap of the first race I came off and couldn't start my bike and ended up 14th or something like that in that one and got fourth in the next so I lost a load of points to Mark Jones and I didn't think I'd gain them back and that was the championship over. But I knuckled down and stayed in front of them boys and it turned out to be my championship again.

"I was struggling with Mark this year but I don't know what the matter was with Wayne. At the beginning of the season he was going

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Mike Foster – looks better side-on than head-on

profile

Inside Line Foster on Anderson

Pioneer Yamaha technician Mike Foster has spent the past two seasons working with Brad and sees a side to him that would surprise many in the sport.

"Everybody thinks Brad's just nuts – they don't give him credit for the skills he's got," reckons Mike. "When we went to Pontrilas for the KWS he was 30 seconds a lap quicker than Wayne Smith in qualifying and that was lap after lap after lap – now that takes skill. It's the first time I've ever had to put out a pit signal after the first lap saying 35 seconds lead! He ended up lapping up to second.

"He's super-fit and every time he gets on a bike gives 110 per cent. He and Embo are just made for each other. Even if he finishes last you know he's given it everything – he's a pleasure to prepare bikes for."

And Finally... Cheers M'Dears!

It's hard to find sponsors in this day and age so when you get a good one you want to keep them. Over to you Bradley... "I'd like to thank DAF Timber, that's my local sponsor. He helps with supplying a van at the moment and I take his lad out through the week. He's a big hand because if it wasn't for him I'd be struggling. There's also my mechanics Mike and Tim who are really good and Roy Emberson and Yamaha."

well and he just seemed to peak off a little bit. Mark's been my rival all the way through this year – I needed to get out the gate ahead of him and try and stay in front of him but if I didn't I had to work hard to try and chase him down because he's a top class rider. It's hard to beat him."

As far as racing goes Brad, Mark and Wayne have one thing in common – they've all got world championship pace but ride for teams that only contest a handful of GPs each year. So while they were locking horns at Blaxhall in early August, the men they need to beat in the Maxxis British championship were dodging the trees at Namur. And it's hardly a surprise that exposure to the pace of, say, Christophe Pourcel helps riders step it up when they return to domestic competition.

"People ask me why don't I do GPs and the thing is I would if I had the money but Roy can't afford to do all of them. It's probably right that riders who do GPs go better because they're doing them and the British championship week-in, week-out while I'm doing British championship, the four-strokes and KWS.

"At least I'm still riding and trying to keep fit and fast but those boys are out there racing against the top riders and it has to help them be quick. The boys who are just in front of us are

in the top 10 in the world and there I am just behind and I find it frustrating. That's what I want to try and do next year – push real hard and see if I can try and keep up with them."

There is a glint of light at the end of the tunnel for Brad with the news that Embo's lining up some starts in the world MX3 championship for '07. "I think he needs to do some GPs next year to get him up to the next level before it's too late," reckons Roy – and it's a fact that's not lost on Brad.

"I'm 25 now and I'm getting on so I need to try and do something before I get too old. I reckon your peak's about 28 years old so hopefully I can get on it. GPs are the top level and if people came forward and tried to help me a bit and I had the chance then I would give GPs a go but it's that hard to get people to give you a hand to get there. It's hard to get sponsors in this type of game because there's that many teams out there trying the same things to get sponsors."

There are other parallels between Brad and Wayne Smith. For starters both are from the north of England, many miles away from the centre of the British MX scene. But while Wayne has relocated from Cumbria to mid Wales to be nearer his team, Brad's staying put in County Durham.

"I'm getting a house built at Tow Law – hopefully it'll be built next month – and I'll just keep on travelling up and down from there. The travelling p****s me off but the houses are that expensive when you move further down the country and I'm struggling to afford this one never mind trying to afford something down there."

Wayne and Brad also both race MX2 in the Maxxis series and climb aboard 450Fs for the British thumpers. And, just like Wayne, Brad can find positives in both machines.

"I like to ride my 250F because it's nice and light and I can flick it about and with my 450F it's got more power which I enjoy as well. On the 450 I just grab a handful and away I go. The 450's harder to work with and because I'm light myself it's harder to keep hold of than the 250F. When I get in panic spots I just give it a bit more throttle and try and get myself straightened up.

"People are trying to get us on the 450 for next year and have said I'll do good but I've said I want to stick with the 250 for another year and give it all what for and see where I can end up. It'll be my last year I think in the 250Fs and then I'll go 450. I'm going to stay with Roy for another year and see how it goes."

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I've just started to train at the gym and I'm feeling tired and sore at work the following day. Is this normal? Will this improve as I continue to train?

Jake, via email

Alan says: It's not uncommon to feel tired or worn out the following day if you're new to training and delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) is again common and related to hard physical exercise. However things will improve!

As you get into a training routine your body adapts and can adapt to feel normal and recovered the following day – even if you are training every day. There are some things that you can do to help recovery though. Good nutritional intake soon after exercise – pasta, fruit and lots of water are very good. Beer and pasties are not (speak for yourself – SL).

Also try and get a good eight hours of sleep after a gym session. Warm down exercises such as steady cycling, a light swim or hot/cold baths will also help you to recover and feel fresh after a session in the gym.

One last thing, don't go too hard at weights training and do night after night of that. You will get much more benefit for your riding with focus on cardio and endurance exercise to begin with and heavy weights are often the most common source of muscle soreness and pain.

Lazy Liam

When the nights draw in and I can't ride in the evenings or go for a run I struggle to motivate myself to do any exercise. Have you got any tips?

Liam, Bristol

Alan says: Now that the season is drawing to a close and the clocks have gone back it's very easy to lose all motivation for the winter and be content sat on the sofa with a DVD as it's grim outside.

Don't slip into this habit completely! Give yourself a break from everything motocross related for a few weeks and do other things that get put on the backburner during the season. Then after this go through the race dates for next season and put them into your diary. This will hopefully help motivation as you look at the challenges for next year.

Believe me when I say you will achieve very little if you only go out in the nice weather and

do little training. There are others racing in the same series who will be working hard!

Try to plan your goals for the season – figure out what you want to achieve. This will help you see why you're going to train and put in lots of effort.

Plan a training routine for the week. Having something written down on the fridge is good to help you know what you should be doing and often helps to fight off laziness. Design a plan with help from a knowledgeable trainer so you're using your time in the best possible way.

Join a gym. Once you're there they are great to help you stick to your training and you can monitor progress well by using the same equipment week in and week out. They are not just for fitness freaks and using a gym two to three times a week is great to improve fitness. They're also surprisingly sociable places.

Buy an MP3 player! A great excuse to get yourself an early Christmas present and a very good way to help motivate yourself to train. On the stationary bike, at home or even in the gym music is a great motivator so load up some play lists and head off.

Remember that championships are won in the off-season! If you think of any of the riders you read about in this magazine they'll be working hard over the winter. It's great to relate to these guys and this will help you put in that effort to progress, even if you are not racing to their level.

Sore Suttty

I've been doing a lot of road cycling recently and although I enjoy it I'm finding I am getting pains in my elbows and tingling in my fingers. What could this be?

Suttty, Morecambe

Alan says: Cycling is a great form of training and due to minimal impact stress on the joints there is little incidence of injury associated with it. However as the exercise is prolonged and duration is often quite high, discomfort can occur.

From what you describe it sounds as though the pain is caused due to pressure on the ulnar nerve. This nerve runs from the shoulder, down the arm and into the hand. It passes close to the surface of the elbow and it's this nerve that is bumped when you hit your funny bone.

Pressure, entrapment or rubbing of this nerve can cause pain in the hands and at

the elbow.

I would advise a few steps to help avoid this.

Fit another grip over the top of your existing road bike grip tape. This will add more sponge and give to the grip and reduce pressure on your hands.

Specialized bicycles make Body Geometry gloves that have a special gel pad on the palm of your hand under which the ulnar nerve runs. This helps relieve pressure and discomfort. These are worth a look or alternatively any other padded cycling gloves will also help.

If you are still noticing any pain see your doctor for an examination to see if there is anything that may be trapping or rubbing this nerve and causing the pain.

Long-hours Louis

I find it hard to find the time to train as I have a family and work quite long hours. However, I do want to improve my fitness to get better at hare and hounds events. What can I do?

Louis, Gloucester

Alan says: Having the time to train, ride during the week and compete at the weekends is something many of us would love but in reality is not a realistic option. Finding the time to train is often hard and is one reason why many people don't bother – they don't know what to do in their limited time to be of any benefit.

Hare and hounds events are tricky to train for with limited time as they require prolonged efforts at high intensity and without mid-week training will be very hard work at the weekend. The main training focus for these events is to build endurance through cardio exercises such as cycling, swimming or running. This can form a basis from which you could add weights training, time permitting.

Think about cycling to work once or twice a week. Many people drive a relatively short distance to work and if there are suitable changing facilities cycling to work is a great way to start the day and build very good fitness in what would otherwise be lost time.

Try to do a training session straight after





work or before work. After slumping on the couch it's hard to motivate or find the time to train. Therefore a session before you have settled will be ideal and you will be back for tea and have the whole evening left.

If you travel with work pack a pair of trainers. Running is a great form of exercise and if you are in a hotel you can still exercise even if you are away from home or your gym.

Don't be too ambitious with training. Set a realistic training schedule of two sessions a week to start with and once you're able to stick to them add another session into your week.

It will all help when the weekend comes and you are out on the bike!

Pumped-up Paul

I really suffer very badly from arm pump – how can I cure it?

Paul, Peterborough

Alan says: Arm pump is a rider's worst nightmare and often turns a great race pace into a slow struggle as you have no control and a death grip. It is mainly caused by muscle fatigue to the forearm muscles – as they are working hard using the clutch and brake levers lactic acid builds up and impairs their function. It slows the muscle down and this reduces your control of it. It is not something that is in your head or some mystical affliction. It sometimes rears its head when you are nervous as you grip too tightly.

The best way to train for it is to exercise the muscles to build their fatigue resistance. Using spring grips, Powerballs or upper body cardio exercises such as rowing and cross trainer machines will all help reduce arm pump as well

as weight training.

Weights are sometimes seen as a cause of arm pump but only by those who don't know what they are doing with them. You shouldn't lift very heavy weights but lighter weights with more repetitions. Powerballs are very good as they train the whole forearm and hand and help you adapt to the feeling of arm pump too.

Nervous Neil

I get very nervous at race meetings and often don't eat much until the racing is over. I don't think this is helping my racing but don't know how to overcome the nerves to eat?

Neil, Bognor Regis

Alan says: Race day nerves affect different people in different ways and I for one am rubbish at eating when I have butterflies. However you need to eat on race day!

Motocross and even more so enduros require a steady supply of carbohydrate for the body to use to supply energy to the muscles. Without a sufficient intake you will become fatigued prematurely and not be able to perform anywhere near your best. I know

nerves make it hard to stomach anything but try drinking proper energy drinks that contain carbohydrate. SIS make some great, tasty drinks that will help you take in energy in a drink.

Think of other snacks to eat – Jaffa cakes, figs, even jelly babies can all give a good source of energy and are easier to stomach than a baked potato or pasta.

Realise that eating is very important and you need to adapt to eating. Smaller snacks such as sandwiches, malt loaf and cereal bars are often much easier to nibble on than big meals.

Try to have a big meal the evening before and have food prepared before you go to the race. This will make it easier to want to eat and set you in good stead for the race. Good luck!

Ask Alan

Your questions answered

If you'd like Alan to answer your questions related to all aspects of training, nutrition and injuries email him directly with the heading 'DBR Questions' at alan.milway@talk21.com



CZECH BOOKED!

Jack's driving habits land him in hot water with the Czech police but does he learn his lesson? Not on your life...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX Journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

Jack Burnicle

Usual signature of bearer

Signature du titulaire

Usual signature of wife

KEES VANDER VEN
(ETM) HAS CZECH
SOLDIER CUECKING
HIS PROGRAMME AS
HE SCIPS TO THIRD
OVERALL

A WORD of warning. Do not U-turn in the Czech Republic. The police take grievous offence. I know. I've done it. Twice. The second time 25 years after the first. And I almost ended up behind bars again.

Loket, which lies due west of Prague, has established itself in recent years as the home of the Czech Republic's annual motocross grand prix. But the Loketske Serpentina circuit is not the first venue to host serial GPs in the former Eastern Bloc country.

As a communist state, Czechoslovakia welcomed its first 500cc grand prix to Prerov in 1961. A year later, the 250cc world championship came into being and the Czech round took place at a huge, rugged track called Holice, 80 miles east of Prague.

For 23 years the Czech 250GP returned to this vast, unruly

venue. Its support classes packed with eventually elderly CZs, Holice boasted a start straight like an aircraft runway flanked by an enormous, grassy bank packed with spectators and several old red brick barns.

Then Povaska Bystrica's gigantic wooded hillside intervened and although 125 and 250cc rounds reappeared five times more, the no longer Iron Curtain finally fell on Holice with Yves Demaria's 1994 250 victory.

I undertook my only visit to Holice 25 summers ago. Czechoslovakia being a communist state meant I had to spend a day at the Czech embassy in Notting Hill Gate, armed with a letter of invitation confirming the purpose of my visit. This led to filling in copious forms and returning at a later date to collect the visa without which I couldn't enter the country.

HOLICE-ČSSR

DESCRIPTION SIGNALLEMENT

Bearer	Titulaire	★	Wife	Femme
Occupation	Profession	GRAPHIC DESIGNER		
Place of birth	Lieu de naissance	BILLINGHAM		
Date of birth		9/3/47		



Once it had subsided from the temperature of the sun's surface the spluttering Skoda plodded on, only just making it to Holice. Fortunately, Dave Watson's team-mate Neil Hudson was a brilliant, intuitive engineer. 'Nellie' kindly cobbled together the surviving lengths of plug lead to create a kind of two-and-a-half-cylinder engine that sounded like an old 2CV Citroen. But at least it worked!

We arrived to find that the circuit was celebrating its 30th anniversary. My press pack included a fine booklet commemorating the men who had competed there across those three glorious decades.

The course, baked hard, rutted and dusty in the humid late-May weekend, attracted a huge crowd to witness the latest instalment of a gripping duel for 250GP honours between Hudson and defending champion Georges Jobe (Suzuki). Never more than three seconds adrift, Nellie shadowed the 20-year-old Belgian throughout the first 45-minute moto as they forged ahead of a pack led by KTM's Kees van der Ven but Watson cooked his clutch and his chances on the startline.

The first turn, a left-right flick after a fast ramped jump halfway down the mighty runway caught out wild Italian Maurizio Dolce (Maico) who ploughed straight on and rejoined the track last! Tall Austrian Heinz Kinigadner (Puch) fell in a sequence of chicanes, baulking a bunch of riders before recovering resolutely from 25th place to eighth in stamina-sapping conditions.

German Rolf Dieffenbach (Honda) cut through from a poor start to snatch a late fourth from Jean-Claude Laquaye (SWM) while stylish American Mike Guerra, off an even worse getaway, swept past tiring Husqvarna team-mate Raymond Boven to grab sixth on the 10th lap of a long, arduous race.

Riding with immense fervour, Dolce bolted through the field and briefly grabbed a deserved championship point (they only paid down to tenth back then!) until, exhausted, he succumbed to Dieffenbach's agricultural team-mate 'Fiery' Fritz Kobele. After a succession of CZ support races, the GP riders reassembled for race two. An early error by

Finally, I flew to Prague with twinkling Irishman Robert Watson, whose son Dave was a rookie Yamaha factory rider that year. We hired a stone-age Skoda with air-cooled rear engine. At 90 quid for the weekend this antiquated, unreliable lump proved the most expensive hire car I'd ever rented!

Halfway to Holice I noticed the engine temperature rising but typically ignored this phenomenon until it nudged into the red. Then I mentioned it to Robert. He yelled at me to stop, jumped from the car and flicked open the louvred rear bonnet to reveal an incandescent engine, its plug leads already melting against the glowing cylinder block.

NEIL HUDSON (YAMAHA)
HOWLS PAST HUGE
CROWD IN FRONT OF
EX-CHAMPION GENNADY
MOISEV (CZ)



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Jobe allowed Boven and Hudson to skip past but as Nellie rode round the burly blond Belgian to take a crucial lap two lead Boven unwittingly moved over, blocked the Yamaha and opened the door for Georges. Hudson, as furious as such a quiet man could ever get, burst past and closed radically on Jobe, pushing hard all the way but sliding off as he launched one final assault on their last, riveting lap.

Van der Ven once more led the chasing cast from Laquaye, Watson, Dane Soren Mortensen (KTM) and a forceful Guerra but Dieffenbach unloaded on the opening circuit.

Under pressure from Italian New Yorker Guerra, Watson prepared to lap – for the first of three occasions – one David Heany. A portly, charming 39-year-old mounted on a Maico, Heany had posted a practice time 26 seconds slower than the second-slowest competitor! Having ridden in Czecho three times previously, the genial Southern Irishman explained that AMK Holice treated their annual GP as a display of “international comradeship” and liked to welcome participants from as many countries as possible. Heany therefore represented the Republic of Ireland!

Unfortunately the two Irish Daveys collided and Ulsterman Watson went down, losing two places and the rhythm essential for dealing with such a demanding track. Dropping behind Guerra and Dieffenbach, Dave finished seventh while loudly hailed local veteran Jaroslav Falta (CZ), cheered every inch of the way by a vast throng, just lost out on the final point to Finn Matti Tarkkonen's Yamaha.

The happy-go-lucky 250GP circus then headed off towards Samokov in Bulgaria while we, thanks to Hudson's mechanical genius, stuttered back to Prague come Monday morning. The Czechs are sparing in their signposting of the country's main airport. We ended up in the centre of their magnificent capital city, lost. I performed an impromptu, misfiring U-turn. The ‘Polizi’ pulled us over. I pleaded. They scolded, then pointed us in the right direction.

Lost again, we picked up a hitching soldier carrying the biggest backpack this side of Ben Nevis. As this guttural giant sank like Hagrid into the back seat, the nose of our Skoda lifted skywards and the inside fell quite dark. At least he knew the way but it was up a long, gruelling

incline that our ailing automobile could scarcely scale. Finally, after several groaning miles, we staggered thankfully over the summit and into the airport, too relieved to even register a complaint with the car hire company.

This year I returned to Czecho in a big silver Skoda that worked. The beautiful Eastern European architecture and typography still fascinate which is probably why I took a wrong turning en-route to the hotel and wrenched a quick U-turn. Foolish boy!

Plod appeared from nowhere (in a Skoda!) and pulled me over. What again? It was late. I was tired. They insisted I was in serious trouble. I got narked. They breathalysed me (I don't drink). They demanded my driving licence and passport. Both were in the hotel. I snapped. They reared up, threatened incarceration and reluctantly let me go. I eventually found my way back to Prague Airport come Monday morning via an unintentionally scenic route. It's still a long drag out of the city up that interminable hill, even in a decent motor.

So should you fly to Czecho, leave plenty of time to make it back to Prague Airport. And whatever happens, never U-turn!



WINNER GEORGES JOBÉ, ON THE LIMIT BUT FAILING TO IMPRESS UNIFORMED SOLDIERS!



HUDSON JUMPS THE YAMAHA IN PURSUIT OF JOBÉ'S SUZUKI DURING THEIR DRAMATIC RACE TWO JUMP

Graham Beamish An Appreciation

For people of a certain era the names Graham Beamish and Suzuki are, quite simply, synonymous. The ebullient Beamish, who died recently aged 73, became Suzuki's UK off-road distributor in the early seventies and established the first Japanese world motocross championship-winning marque as a major force on the British scene.

Spearheaded by such talents as Jonathan Wright, Jeremy Whatley, Geoff Mayes, Dave Thorpe, Dave Watson and his own older son Steven – a contrastingly quiet, thoughtful lad compared to his dad! – Beamish Suzuki won numerous British 125, 250 and schoolboy motocross titles.

Even after relinquishing his role as distributor, Graham travelled frequently abroad to follow the fortunes of his Suzuki stars and still revelled in their success. One such jaunt took us deep into the South of France, to Salindres, with Elsworth's Andy Lee to see Graham's very own prodigy Jem Whatley win the opening 250cc world round of 1988. By then, Graham was operating as an off-road consultant to Heron Suzuki and had himself appointed recently retired GP rider Rob Hooper as team manager.

"Graham was heavily influential in Suzuki becoming a significant player in the UK market," recalls Hooper. "He took the direction. And when it was no longer Beamish Suzuki and had been taken

over by Heron he persuaded them that he was still necessary!"

Born in 1933, Graham began motocrossing after World War Two and working in the family motorcycle shop at Portslade in Sussex. His father also owned property at Golding Barn on the chalk slopes of the South Downs where Graham subsequently lived and which he and his own sons developed into a spectacular British MX championship venue in the early and mid '80s.

Short, stocky and bow-legged, Beamish led a rich and varied racing life, representing Great Britain in the 1950 Motocross des Nations in Sweden at the tender age of 17 and again at Brands Hatch two years later. "But I was too brave for my own good," he confided to me on a fun-packed visit to the 1987 Belgian 500GP at Namur. "My first time racing here, it was very dusty through the woods. Someone told me if I couldn't see, just hold the throttle wide open and count to 10. I reached seven before I hit something and woke up in hospital!"

Nonetheless, Graham became a regular winner at home and abroad until the loss of sight in one eye hampered his vision (he would always merrily hand you those silly little butter packs to open for him at a hotel breakfast table!). Then Beamish Motors, formerly associated with Greeves and Lambretta scooters, acquired Suzuki's off-road franchise and their RM Suzukis and Beamish Suzuki trials bikes made a big impact on the UK scene.

Son Steven also contested motocross GPs and his bright, brash younger brother Danny looked an exceptional prospect until a serious leg injury hijacked his young career (and deeply upset his dad).

"Graham took me on initially, in 1986, to race and do training schools," remembers Hooper fondly. "Then suddenly, in 1987, he announced he was moving to Spain and made me team manager, though Graham was very much about until 1990. He was always really good company to be with..."

He was that. Continental excursions in Beamish's company were a riotous mixture of mirth, ribald repartee and pearls of philosophical wisdom. "Life isn't a rehearsal, y'know, Jack," he told me. "This is the real thing. Make the most of it and don't have any regrets."

Golding Barn hosted post-race parties after Farleigh Castle 500GPs of the '80s. And they usually got out of hand. I recall hapless 1983 winner Hakan Carlqvist being thrown three times into the swimming pool, fully clothed, by temporary Golding Barn resident Graham Noyce.

Graham Beamish loved it. A sparkling, energetic man, he made his mark first as an outstanding all-round rider but perhaps more lastingly as importer and entrepreneur.

Our condolences go to his lovely wife Joyce, sons Steve and Danny, daughter Julie and all his grandchildren. We'll remember their granddad for living life absolutely, wholeheartedly to the full.



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4 stroke	RMZ/KXF/YZF/TE/TC	£215	£299



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KEVIN WINDHAM



Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from famed US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and most recently launched a new bi-weekly MX magazine – Motocross Illustrated – covering both AMA and GP action. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight and features straight from the Stateside scene...



The thinking man's racer?
Kevin Windham ponders
the meaning of life...



THE THINKER!

Kevin Windham is a philosopher in a world of tough nuts and introverts

Since Kevin Windham made his professional debut on his #510 125 Kawasaki in 1994 he has seen the upside and downside to what outsiders believe to be a purely glamorous sport.

He was the first full-time 125cc supercross rider to win a 250cc Main Event while riding for Team Yamaha in 1997 but since then has spent a lot of his time staring at the back of Ricky Carmichael's jersey.

And although he's the 1996 and 1997 125cc Western Regional Supercross Champion, Windham has never won

a National title. In fact, he has finished second in eight National Championships and third in three. And he can now see the end of his motocross racing career on the horizon.

Windham is one of the most introspective and thoughtful motocross racers on the planet today – both on the track and off. His honesty is refreshing in a world of canned answers and as you're about to read he has thought just about everything through. He really is a thinking man's motocross racer...

DBR: What do you think makes you different to the guys you're racing against?

KW: "I try not to think about it that much to be honest with you so this is like the first time I've really thought about it."

"People say I'm a bit more textbook and stuff but that style hasn't proven to win a lot of races. I've been injured quite a bit so I don't know what it has going for me but I'm pretty methodical in my thought process and what I want to do on the track and how I want to prepare for it. ♦

KEVIN WINDHAM

"There are things I feel like I can and can't do. I think now a lot of guys are pushing it to that new level and finding that quad jump or that really tricky section to do and these last couple years have kind of forced me to start to think outside of that limit.

"I think maybe the biggest thing is that I put a lot of thought into what I do. Not to knock anybody else because I don't know how much thought the other guys put into it – it just may look a little different when I do it. I don't know."

DBR: In your opinion is motocross sometimes harder for a smarter rider?

KW: "Yeah, I think it can be. If you can ride through things and overcome adversity and not let little things bother you it's easier. And it's harder to do if you over think it. You may not get injured as much but guys that can ride through things without thinking about it and focusing on it, yeah they have an advantage. Clearly."

DBR: One of the misconceptions of naturally talented riders is that it comes so easy that they don't have to think about it but isn't it kind of the opposite?

KW: "I do think a lot. I think it's a good misconception although I can go without riding for a while and it doesn't affect me much. I sat out for three weeks following the last national and I rode the week leading into the McGrath Invitational – twice – and I hadn't rode supercross since Vegas but I feel really good.

"I'm turning good times and I've already done 20-lap motos so I feel like I'm prepared and ready. I think, from that standpoint, once I get it, I don't lose it. I rode a unicycle as a kid and I feel like I can go hop on one and ride it again right now and when I'm not able to fly my airplane for a while I feel like when I get back in the cockpit I'm at home.

"I feel the same way on the motorcycle. Sometimes I can take a little time off and come back. It's like once those skills are imbedded, they don't really go anywhere."

DBR: So maybe time off for you can actually make you feel better, rather than make you feel rusty...

KW: "I for sure feel rejuvenated right now, whether or not that means my skills are as sharp as they were I don't know. But I feel really comfortable right now and to put in the times I put in at the test track, it makes me feel like I'm where I need to be.

"Obviously, I could be better and hard work gets you better but sometimes you have to find that happy medium where if you need three weeks off after 28 races in a scheduled series, which leads to the McGrath Invitational, the MGM [US Open], the Canadian rounds, supermoto stuff, NASCAR stuff and you start to see that you're gone 40 weekends a year.

"You got to have time off so there's that happy medium to take the time off that you need and then when you come back still feel like your mind's good and you're ready to ride because you haven't been gone that long. It's good."

DBR: With Chad Reed doing a supercross-only deal next year some people say that taking a summer off from the Nationals might hurt your speed by the time supercross rolls around again. What do you think about that?

KW: "I don't think so. You have from the end of September all the way until January to really get ready. You might be really hurting for the Open or for the Canadian rounds or something but when it matters he'll be ready.

"I think if he wants rest there's plenty enough time to get back going and there's plenty enough races to go test your speed. Part of being pro is that if you don't have it – which we don't always have it, the speed that is – you have to find it somewhere. He'll have time to find it."

DBR: Speaking of finding speed when you returned to supercross after your broken arm, it seemed like you had a bit of a hard time and then as the Nationals progressed you got closer and closer to the guys out front. Where did you find the speed?

KW: "I was struggling with being comfortable on the bike. It's funny talking about how comfortable I can be after taking off a few weeks but we've changed direction and I'm just super happy right now in the bike. It's been a long road to get back from the arm injury and I don't know how much of it had to do with the arm and all of the other things that go into doing good at the races but things are back now and I'm ready."

DBR: Do you feel like that's an advantage for a rider who's able to just wing it compared to a more calculated rider such as yourself – that they can just go ride on a shock that they don't like or something?

KW: "I think it's a lot harder because when I'm not happy... I've gotten to a point in my career and in my riding where I like things the way I like them. I'm kind of picky right now. If things aren't going right, I bang my head against the wall. We want to find what's right, we want to make me happy and sometimes it just takes a lot of steps to get to that point."

DBR: You've talked before about starting a Kevin Windham MX School. Is that something you're still thinking about?

KW: "I have a lot of people ask me about that but I don't really know what I want to do yet. I haven't put a lot of thought into it just because all I've ever done is race motorcycles. If I could help someone in this industry that would be really cool but I might just move on to something else.

"You never know where I'm going. At this point I'm just focusing on finishing up strong however many years I have left and hoping that something comes of it – either in another industry or this one.

"I'm not going to sit around and do nothing. You've got to keep working and moving forward. This is all I know so if I can go to some other form of motorsports that would be really, really cool but if not I don't see myself leaving this sport either because it's just who I am – it's the root of me."





DBR: You've been riding since you were how old?

KW: "Three."

DBR: So that's about 26 years?

KW: "Yeah, thereabouts. I was at the races before that. My brother Kurtis is 11 years older than me and I was going to races before then but they just put me on one at three."

DBR: So is this something that your kids are going to be doing at some point?

KW: "I just spend every day with my girls riding four-wheelers and motorcycles and my oldest – Madeline – prefers motorcycles over four-wheelers but right now whatever they want to do, I support them."

"My girl loves to dance, she loves to ride and at a flip of a switch she's a total little Miss Priss. Wherever she goes I just want to support her 100 per cent. I'm not one to push motocross on my kids. If they want to do it, I want to push motocross but if they don't want to, I want to push whatever they want. That's the biggest deal."

"I'm going to be in a position where I'm somewhat self-employed and as they get older I'll be thinking about what I can do to do work and still bring them to local races or dances or whatever."

DBR: I've spoken to a few guys who even though their whole lives are motocross they actually don't want their kids to race because of injuries or the pressures of racing or whatnot. How do you feel about that?

KW: "It can be bittersweet. It's hard to say. You've got people who aren't injured who look at injured people and

they're just like, 'man, I wouldn't want my racing career to end like that'. But then you go to talk to somebody like Ernie and they're like – and I'm speaking on his behalf, so I don't know if it's completely accurate – but they might say, 'I would never hang up my boots and not race because of what happened to me'.

"It's a two-way street and I think when you're faced with premature births or paralysis or all of these adversities in any sport you find a way to overcome them once you have to. It's right in front of you and you have to do something about it. You're either going to succumb to the deal or you're going to overcome it."

"I think until you're put in that position you kind of can't really understand what's really in you – what's at your core. It's easy to say, 'well, I wish I didn't break my arm last year'. But would I quit racing because I broke my arm? No. If I wasn't racing, I could've broken it doing something stupid so what does that change, really?"

DBR: You've talked about this NASCAR test you've got coming up with Boris Said's SoBe No Fear team. Pure speculation would say that Kevin Windham with his awesome throttle control and finesse would be an unbelievable racecar driver.

KW: "There are a few guys that think that. Right now I've driven in some two-seater cars as a total passenger hanging on, messing with the radio and the A/C (laughs) but right now this is just a great opportunity."

"I've been with No Fear forever and Boris Said is one of the coolest individuals I've ever met and the whole team is excited about giving me an opportunity to drive a car. I'm excited about taking the opportunity to drive a car. If something comes of it, great. If nothing comes of

it, it's just a great time. Who gets to drive a full-on Cup car? Sure, you have the Petty School where you go around but this is a different deal. This is full-on here's the keys, go rip it."

"It's cool because they're going to the 'car of the future' next year so they've pretty much said, 'drive the wheels off of it and try not to hit the wall'. But it's going to be fun and whatever comes of it only time will tell. To have the opportunity is cool and fun and I love to race so if I can do something competitively in another field of motorsports then, yeah, I'm going to do it."

"I don't have any expectations right now, though. I know what people say about my riding style and how I can finesse it and how I could have good throttle control and be good at it so hopefully they're right and we'll see in a couple weeks."

DBR: It seems like there is a lot of interest from NASCAR in motocross racers all of a sudden. There are some guys in there that have motocross experience...

KW: "They all have motocross experience. It's amazing. I talked to RC about it a little bit before we went to a couple races – we've been to four races recently – and Ricky's like, 'dude, you're going to be walking through the pits and you won't believe the people who will come up and say they enjoy watching us race'."

"Obviously, the Clint Bowyers and stuff like that but even the pit crews and people behind the scenes – there are so many people that ride. I can't even name all the guys because there are more that ride than don't. It's amazing and it was an honour to be there and actually have them recognise us. It was really cool. It was a good time and a really awesome feeling."

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MO' MONEY!

Kevin Windham and James Stewart
cash in big during the off-season

Eric Sorby (#917) leads
Kevin Windham (#14) at the
McGrath Invitational



If an AMA racer raced every major race available in a given year he would end up racing 32 times. Two of those events – the US Open and the Jeremy McGrath Invitational – are two-night events. Those are the only two races that aren't part of a championship series and they both offer huge purses in the hopes of drawing the country's top riders.

The first of the two is the new Jeremy McGrath Invitational. Jeremy thought it up himself with his main idea being to bring excitement back into supercross and for the riders to have a good time racing the event. Of course, the \$500,000 purse makes for a good time for somebody.

Both nights' racing start out with match races where the top 16 qualifiers race each other head-to-head, one round at a time, until ultimately the final two race for a winner's purse of \$30,000 per night. Second gets \$20,000 and so it goes on back through 16th.

With James Stewart sitting out the event and both Ricky Carmichael and Chad Reed with hurt shoulders the hands-on favourite to win the JMI is Kevin Windham and he'd rather not disappoint seeing as there's a possible \$185,000 maximum award on the line (\$30,000 for each night's match race and \$125,000 for the overall winner of the two Main Events).

Windham seals the deal on night one as he works his

way through the early rounds of the match race with ease only to meet up with his 250F-mounted team-mate Josh Grant in the final.

With the 200cc extra displacement Windham grabs the holeshot and then holds the lead for the entire two-lap race to the finish, pocketing \$30,000.

"I actually came out of the first turn pretty good every time and my strategy was just to get in and get out," Windham says. "Some of those guys were getting down there and doing the brake-check thing and really going slow but I figured hell, I'd go in there hot and try to get out quick and that worked well for me. It helped to be on a 450 but it was tough. You couldn't rule out the

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Lites guys and you had to protect your insides because the berms were really big and fluid. It stayed pretty clean though and there was some good racing there."

The first night's Main Event is all Windham as Eric Sorby grabs the holeshot and Windham passes him right away and splits while Grant works his way from behind for a solid second just ahead of Nick Wey.

"Sorby got me down there and I thought he was going to overshoot it because you lose a lot of your braking power going over that jump face but he didn't," reckons Windham. "He kept it around there and I was able to get him right there by the finish line."

Night two is more of the same for the most part as Windham again dominates the match races and again faces off in the finale against Grant although this time Grant is forced to put a last-turn block-pass on David Vuillemin that could've shaken Vuillemin's fillings loose in order to get there.

Once in the final though Windham leads both laps to easily best his 250F-mounted team-mate.

"The match race was something that kept you on the edge for sure," claims Kevin. "It was scary. You could get put out with one move. You had to ride two laps completely perfect and that's tough. Josh was riding good on the and everybody's not wanting to get beat by a Lites guy on a big bike so there was a lot of pressure involved. It was awesome. Everything worked out how I wanted it to but you never know in that kind of racing."

In the final event of the weekend, night two's Main

Event sees Windham start second and quickly move into the lead and take off while Vuillemin gives chase.

Vuillemin stays close for a while but eventually Windham breaks away to win the 16-lap race. Vuillemin hangs on for second while Grant gets as far as third before deciding it's in his best interest to not push the issue on Vuillemin who he nearly knocked down in the match race.

"I knew if he got second I'd get second overall anyway and there was no point in rushing it when I've got second locked down," Grant says. "I would've battled with him but I didn't need to."

But the night and the weekend is all Windham and he pockets the maximum award of \$185,000.

"It was like an escalating weekend for sure and the closer you got to the end the more you realise there's a lot of money on the line. \$30,000 is nothing to sneeze at and 60 isn't either but then I had the big one on the line at 125 grand and it took two nights of perfect riding to get that accomplished."

The US Open is the more established of the off-season, big-money races and sees the return of Ricky Carmichael to racing action and US Open debut of James Stewart.

For the first time the night starts with a Superpole showdown which allows each rider the opportunity to set one fast lap by themselves on the track. The winner of the Superpole on each night would earn \$10,000. If the same rider wins the Superpole, gets the Main Event holeshot and wins the Main Event it's called the 'Trifecta'



Nick Wey flies high in Vegas

K-Dub's the big winner in LA



Blast off at the US Open with, from left, David Vuillemin, Ricky Carmichael, Ivan Tedesco, James Stewart and Michael Byrne



RC gets by Vuillemin only for Stewart to swoop on them both

and is worth \$50,000. Do it both nights and not only do you get \$50,000 each night you also get another \$50,000 bonus. That, added to the \$100,000 winning purse, makes it possible for one rider to win \$250,000 for two nights' work.

Stewart starts it off right with a Superpole win on night one then grabs the \$5,000 Main Event holeshot while Carmichael spins out and falls in the first turn getting up dead last. Windham runs second early on but Stewart takes off.

Carmichael is storming through the pack and actually passes Windham for second with less than eight laps left in the 25-lap event. Since it's a two-night event second is as good as first on night one and Carmichael knows it.

"I went in and turned too fast and laid the bike down," Carmichael claims. "I don't know if I hit the guy on the outside of me or what but I just spun around and had my work cut out for me. I knew I had to get to second place. I believe I can challenge James tomorrow night."

But night one means \$50,000 for Stewart which isn't a bad way to start it off. "I got a good jump but Ricky pinched me off on the start," Stewart said. "I think he wanted to break what I had going and he pushed the front end out. He made it back up and ended up second and stuff. I thought Kevin was pretty far out and honestly I can't believe he caught him."

Windham is the guy who ends Stewart's run at \$250,000 as he tops the Superpole event on night two and grabs himself \$10,000.



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Josh Grant goes great guns against the big-bore bikes at the Invitational



Sorby sticks a hard pass on Smith

"The track was a little bit slick and I just went for it. The guys said I still looked really smooth but I felt so out of control – I felt like my feet were coming off and stuff and that's the way these guys have been doing it. Ricky's the king of hanging it out like that. I made one or two little bobbles but I made a good laptime and I felt that James might be able to beat it. I figured he would beat it to be honest with you. I knew it was good but I didn't think it was as good as it turned out."

Ivan Tedesco gets out front early in the Main Event and collects the \$5,000 holeshot award before giving way to Vuillemin and then crashing a couple of laps in, holding up Stewart, which allows Carmichael by for second. Over the next few laps Carmichael fights to find a way past Vuillemin but the Frenchman won't budge.

Finally, Carmichael grabs the inside in a tight right-hander and just as he secures the position Stewart comes flying in and passes them both. Carmichael re-assumes second and Vuillemin falls back to third.

"We started catching Vuillemin and Ricky passed him and the way Vuillemin was block-passing Ricky I didn't want him to hold up me so I just went for both of them," says Stewart.


Carmichael assumes the role of pressuring Stewart and does so until only three laps from the end when Stewart stalls in the tight section outside the arena but keeps the bike rolling as he attempts to refire it. Carmichael tries to go around the rolling bike and ends up pinched between the bike and the track markers and goes down just as Stewart refires his machine and takes off. The race and the US Open title are Stewart's.

"I just went in there and I was in a taller gear like third gear and I just went around there and stalled it. He tried getting around me on the outside so I stuck my elbow strong so he couldn't get around me and he went off the track and fell."

Carmichael gets up to finish second but he's upset. "If I would've stopped I would've had to wait for his bike

to crank first," Carmichael says. "If I would've waited he still would've cranked up and went on. Maybe I would've had a chance at him but... After that happened, I came around and my mechanic had '3 laps' on the board and I was just like, 'damn!' It would've been over. If I would've gotten by him – the rest would've been history."

"But to be honest with you guys I surprised myself tonight. I surprised myself this weekend with the way my shoulder is and not getting buck-wild everywhere. I think I was the most consistent guy through the whoops and I was really good through the dragon back. Unfortunately, things didn't go my way."

Stewart leaves Vegas with \$150,000 and a brand-new Bentley Continental GT as a gift from his sponsor Red Bull. "I can't gamble it so I know it's safe until I get out of here," Stewart says of the money. "I'm still young so I'm not going to put it up! I'll throw the \$150,000 in the back of the Bentley and roll out on the 15 [freeway – toward California]." 



Grant comes out top 250F pilot at the US Open



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Godfrey puts the
'06er through its
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WAKKER'S KWACKERS!

After two years of testing Kawasaki's 250
two-strokes Geoff finally feels able to put finger
on keyboard and cast some judgement...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Suttly



WALKER'S WORLD

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ALL GOOD things must come to an end and this particular good – no, great – thing is my time with the beloved KX250 two-stroke which I've had the pleasure of riding in just about every type of terrain and situation possible over the last two years.

My '05 and '06 Kawasakis have performed pretty much perfectly with only the odd minor glitch with just a few changes to the motor and chassis on both models over the two years.

In stock form the '05 KX had a different feel when compared to the '06 model. The first bike I had required two big changes to get it really ready for action. The first work was the front forks. 2005 was the first time Kayaba twin chamber units were used on any Kawasaki.

The forks had a harsh feeling in the middle of the stroke giving a hard feel to the front end. This is okay for supercross but not for me as I was trying to make the bike useable in most forms of off-road – which is the absolute beauty of two-fifty two-strokes.

The forks basically use an internal chamber which is separate from the outer bodies of the fork. On the '05 KX I completely rebuilt the forks and changed the compression setting to a slightly softer one. This setting can only be changed when the inner chamber is opened and the compression valve is removed from the top of the chamber – look out for a feature on re-sealing twin chamber forks real soon.

It's important to bleed the system through to

remove all air within the inner body after working on the forks. This part of the fork requires its own internal pressure to work and an incorrectly built inner chamber will make your forks impossible to live with! If you don't know what your doing just leave it to an expert...

After the fork re-working the front-end felt plush and in tune with the stock shock unit which worked perfectly for me from the off. The balance and feeling of confidence the '05 chassis gave me was great and I honestly didn't have to change a clicker from my original setting of plus to minus 12 on all clickers.

The motor was next on the agenda and although it produced a fantastic amount of



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Wakker – complete with bleeding hairy boys – made his debut on the '06 KX at the Cardiff SX



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2C wheels are mega



Orange lids were all the rage in '05

useable power in a reasonably easy way, I just wanted to soften and lengthen it slightly to give an easy ride for some longer days in the saddle. There are a few ways to go about changing the power on your smoker and many experts out there will try and baffle you with bull but it can be changed resonable easily to suit different types of riders.

The '05 set-up I used was as follows. The first port of call was the raising of the cylinder. For this, all you have to do is use one extra base gasket under the cylinder. On the Kawasaki this works really well as the gaskets are 'hard' gaskets which means they're a made of a metal internal with a soft outer sealing coating.

These gaskets are re-useable and I found that fitting two base-gaskets did exactly what I wanted and softened the power while making the motor feel more controlable and free revving. Just this simple change makes a superb difference in this bike.

The only other change I made internally was a little bit of piston work which involved some

cleaning and polishing. This was more to do with my search for longevity in the top end and is unnecessary as long as you stick to your hours of useage on any piston. I found on both bikes that you should change the piston after around 20 hours of use.

The exhaust was my next calling for the perfect all-rounder and Craig at DEP came up with the goods. The stock pipe and tailpipe are excellent and very strong but the short tail pipe still made the bike feel a little too aggressive everywhere except the MX track.

The DEP front pipe runs a good length header to keep good smooth bottom-end power and this coupled with the 'enduro' long tail pipe made the power perfect. I didn't feel the need for a flywheel weight as the changes to the motor worked perfectly to compliment an already great motor.

In the other departments of the bike, parts used were personal choice for comfort and practicality. The Renthal Fat Bars allow a little bit of flex which helps when you are getting tired and on the '05 I bolted these to a set of

Apico standard to Fat Bar conversion risers. This raised the bars around 15mm and when standing on the trails for a long time I found this to be really comfortable as I am a bit over six foot tall.

The stock gearing had to be changed and with Renthal sending down a variety of rears to try – the 48-tooth rear and 13-tooth front got the nod for being most practical in all situations. Roy and Graham at 2C wheels and MBO Raceparts came up trumps with the wheels as I really needed an 18 inch rear to replace the stock 19 inch. The 18 inch rear wheels used to fitted to all MX bikes back in the day as the grip provided with them on all terrains is great.

The 19 inch wheels fitted on the more modern bikes are for the more aggressive tracks and offer harder turning capabilities thanks to their lower profile which means you get less 'rolling' of the tyre.

The 18 inch rears are used in enduro and trail riding and are still superb in a lot of mx situations for the average rider. The advantage of the 18 is the fact that the tyre has a higher

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profile and which allows the rubber to wrap around roots and rocks to provide amazing grip on tricky surfaces.

Both Michelin and BF Goodridge provided tyres to pop on the 2C hoops through the year and both worked superbly in MX and off-road. The wheels have done two years now and the only problem I have had was a Bry Mac footpeg in front spokes incident at the St Austell SX! And even with around 15 spokes ripped out the wheel still got me to the finish.

That was pretty much it for the '05 KX and as I still see and service the bike now I can safely say it's going strong in the hands of Crazy Robin and has never missed a beat... Legendary!

The '05 250 was so good that I just had to have another one for this year and it didn't fail to make another great impression.

My first outing on the bike was a pretty dodgy couple of days at the Cardiff Millennium Stadium Supercross – an event I will never forget. What a place to ride my new steed! The first time I threw my leg over it was before first practice and I was regretting listening to my two 'buddies' Lawless and Sutt Dawg when they told me from the safety of DBR Towers that I

would be fine and diddley dandy!

The KX was absolutely awesome and it made up for my failings and lack of fitness at the time by actually getting me around the track which was as close to an AMA set-up as you're going to get in Europe. A fractured ankle and internally bleeding hairy boys were the outcome of a practice crash but the KX had sailed me over the biggest jump of my life and I came away from there battered but loving my new weapon.

I used the bike pretty much in completely standard trim for the supercross as I only had it a day before the event and the biggest difference I felt with the '06 was that the suspension had a softer feeling than its predecessor. This was superb as there was a plusher feel to both ends and the balance of the chassis was there from the off.

The motor underwent the same mods as the '05 model and ended up feeling almost the same although I ran the stock tailpipe as it was a longer unit from stock for this year. The only other motor change this year was the addition of some Boyesen reeds from Vesty UK. The addition of the reeds gave the bike a boost of useable power in the mid-range.

Renthal came up with the goods again with Windham-bend Twinwalls and I went for the Renthal handlebar clamps to accommodate the bars. I didn't raise the bars this year as I did a little less trail and enduro work with the bike as I was riding MX a lot more in a (failed – Sutt) attempt to develop some base strength, fitness and sharpness.

Sutt rode the bike a few times and found that a 13/48 gearing combo worked best for the bike and both lazy ass riders!

So there we have it. The KX 250s of '05 and '06 have been thoroughly tried and tested by the DBR crew and have come up with the goods as absolutely superb all-round bikes which are easy and cheap to maintain and a whole lot of fun to ride.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all these guys and gals for their involvement over the past two years... Steve, Paul, Alex and the crew @ Kawasaki UK, Roy and Graham @ MBO raceparts for the 2C wheels. Rees @ Renthal, Leon and DK @ Apico for Boyesen and Twin Air products, Motul, Motorex, Michelin, BF Goodridge, Maxxis, Dale and Matt @ Sunline ARC (the memory lever is genius) and also Cyclogical. Thank you all...



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Walker's Big Banger

This month's top tip comes to us from Ethan in sunny Wales who's got a solution for anyone who's having trouble with loose grips!

"If you find yourself on race day with a grip that keeps slipping all you need is two relatively easy to find things – gaffer tape and petrol.

"Take off the offending grip and clean the handlebar thoroughly. Then wrap the tape around the bar evenly. Clean the inside of the grip and then pour a very small amount of petrol in there and swirl it around before throwing any excess away.

"Now, slide the grip back on and leave it for 15-20 minutes. While you're waiting the petrol will melt the glue in the tape before sticking your grip to the bar when it dries. Happy riding!"

Thanks for the tip Ethan – your Big Bang Hour Meter is on its way. It's always worth wiring your grips on too as an extra precaution so any slippage does not occur.

For a chance to win a Big Bang Hour Meter of your very own email your top tech tips to me at geoffwalkerdbr@aol.com or post 'em to me at Big Bang Top Tech Tips, DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG.

Failing that, you can always just buy one by giving Baseline a call on 01306 889911.



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Townley helped the Kiwis to third overall at Matterley Basin



Friendly rivalry! BT and Pro Circuit team-mate Ryan Villapoto share a joke at the MXdN

COMEBACK KIWI!

Former MX2 world champ Ben Townley's debut season Stateside was ruined by injury but, as he told us at the MXdN, you've got to stay positive...

Words and photo by Alex Hodgkinson

YOU CAN'T keep a good man down – especially when his name's Ben Townley! The Nations was only the third race this year for the 21-year-old but he still led the Kiwis to a podium finish. Reason enough for DBR to have a quick chat with BT.

DBR: Hard work this year, Ben? All that money for three races!

BT: "Exactly, I'd rather have been doing more."

DBR: Go through your year for us.

BT: "First the knee in January which set me back six months. I was back for a National after that – I was strong and healthy but I just hadn't had enough track time because I hadn't raced since the Nations in France. The next week I was out practising, went down and separated my shoulder so that was another 10 weeks out and I just got back for the final National."

"Basically, it's just been a tough year but you get that in a motocross career. I had five pretty good years in Europe. A year like this is devastating but you just have to look forward and carry on."

DBR: How has the team reacted?

BT: "The team is awesome, Mitch in particular. Working with him has been a fantastic way to start my career in the States. He is so involved with what's going on every day. He's out at the track when we're practising, at the races he's at

the centre of things and he's even fathered me a little bit. Everything there is all new to me again – just like when I came to Europe in 2001 – but there's a lot of people who have been helping me to set myself up the way I have."

DBR: And how's Florida?

BT: "I really like it in Florida, it's awesome there. And I live right down the street from my trainer Eldon Baker. I worked with Yves Demeuelemeester when I was in Europe and that was awesome but what I'm at now with Eldon is a huge step. I get so much out of it because it's one-on-one. There's just me, Eldon and Ricky."

"We're together every day from the time that we wake up in the morning until we finish in the evening. We start training in the morning, a cardio, then we ride in the afternoon. I'm not doing anything different to what I was in Europe but it is so much more intense and we work more specifically on what I'm doing, my strengths and weaknesses, the mind, the body, the whole thing."

"I still believe I have become a better rider this year because of the things I have learnt while I've been there. It's just a shame that because of my injuries I haven't been able to show it yet."

DBR: How did you get the chance to train with Eldon?

BT: "I just rang him. I knew Ricky was coming towards the end of his career and I wanted to work with the best. It was just great timing."

DBR: How is it to be with RC?

BT: "Just awesome. He's a great person, we get on pretty well. Just to be around him, to learn. It's like I was with Josh in Europe. I have learnt so much from both of them, not only riding but also to be a positive person. Ricky has been so successful and when you are with him every day you see the attitude and mentality which brings that success."

DBR: How do you get on with your team-mate Ryan Villapoto?

BT: "He's a really cool kid and I'm sure we'll race each other for a long time. We're starting out in the US at the same time on the same team, we're both young and I guess we'll be racing each other a lot in the next few years."

DBR: How did you enjoy the Nations?

BT: "It was good racing all day. We were pretty lucky to get the starts we did on 250s. It was fun racing with Villapoto, Pourcel and Cairoli. I raced Tony when I won the world title in 2004 and he was very aggressive [at the MXdN]. That was fun."

DBR: Any regrets at leaving KTM?

BT: "None at all."

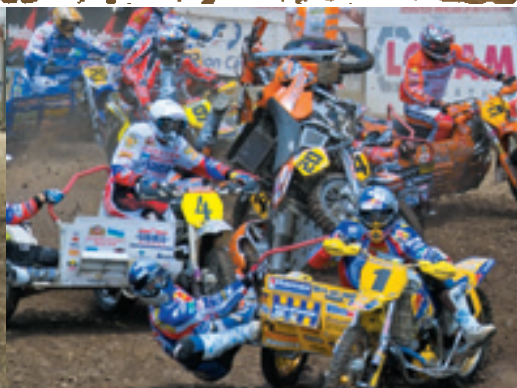




MAD FOR IT!

Brown and Peters do their bit for Queen and Country in the totally, utterly bonkers world of sidecarcross GPs

Words by Leen van der Sluis Photos by Bert van der Sluis and Eddy Koedijk



*Daniel Willemsen and
Sven Verbrugge dominate
the '06 championship*



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BRITISH SIDECAR champion Stuart Brown with Luke Peters in the chair went into the 2006 world championship with high hopes of improving on his '05 final placing of ninth.

Having twice finished as high as fifth in the rough, tough world of sidecar GPs the newly reunited crew – a serious injury in '04 had sidelined Luke – went into the opening round at Oss in Holland in determined mood.

"Our aim for this year is to regain our best ever position in the world championship," said Stuart. "We ranked fifth twice in the years before Luke got injured. Now with Luke back in the chair we hope to pick up where we left off."

Luke Peters was equally optimistic. "We hope to do well this season. I have worked very hard to come back after my severe injuries sustained in Bulgaria in 2004. I missed half the 2004 season and it took the whole 2005 season to recover. So it would please me so much if we are able to be competitive against the fast teams from Holland, Germany and Eastern Europe. We hope for a podium finish in one of the GPs."

Despite this air of optimism the odds were stacked against them. Although physically recovered from his injury, Luke's lack of time in the chair would show. And on top of this Stuart had still not got over a broken wrist sustained in '05 that was plated but not fully healed and he needed painkillers to race.

At the end of their campaign there had been plenty of ups and downs but they still finished inside the world top 10 with a final position of eighth having made the podium – and come close to a heat win – at Teutschenthal in Germany.

The season was dominated by the reigning world champions – the Dutch/Belgian pairing of Daniel Willemsen and Sven Verbrugghe – who were simply awesome. Always posting lap times two or three seconds faster than their rivals, the champs had yet to lose a single race, let alone an overall – whether it was in the GPs, Dutch or Belgian championships or invitational events – until round six in Germany.

A bad start and a crash were the reasons that Willemsen/Verbrugghe did not win in

Teutschenthal. Mechanical failure also prevented a win in heat one in Rudersberg at the final meeting but the title was still theirs by miles.

The five-time world champion Kristers Sergis with Kaspar Stupelis in the chair was supposed to be the biggest threat to Willemsen/Verbrugghe. But it wasn't to be. Right from the start Sergis was down in points after a mechanical problem in the opening race of the championship. Their results at round two in Croatia were better with a 3-2 card but Willemsen was quicker and Sergis knew it. Perhaps in an effort to keep up, Sergis had a huge crash in France and exited the moto – and the season – on a stretcher.

With Sergis and Stupelis out of the series it was the Russian crew Scherbinin/Sosnovskikh who provided the main challenge to Willemsen/Verbrugghe. Despite failing to win a race all season they managed to end the year ahead of the German/Swiss pairing of Happich/Schelbert although it was close – 258 points to 243.



Against the odds
Stuart Brown and
Luke Peters improve
to eighth in
the world



The Watson Bros
finish in the top 20



First corners are
always chaotic

Final Series Standings

World Sidecarcross Championship

1	Willemsen/Verbrugghe	341 points
2	Scherbinin/Sosnovskikh	258
3	Happich/Schelbert	243
4	Rupeikis/Kurpneiks	231
5	Hendrickx/Smeuninx	180
6	Burgler/Betschart	211
7	Hendrickx/Piccart	180
8	Brown/Peters	165
9	Rozehnal/Rozehnal	157
10	Willemsen/Roes	137
20	Watson/Watson	57
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GREEN PARTY!

Take four new Kawasakis, two testers, one photographer, an awesome location and a rather lovely buffet and you've got one hell of a green gathering going on...

Words by Tony Marshall and Suttty Photos by rayarcher.com

'Ave it! Someone spent ages building that berm and along comes Tone on a 250F and totally frickin' destroys it!





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2006 HAS been a great year for Kawasaki as the green team's riders have secured both supercross and motocross world championship wins as well as countless domestic titles right around the globe. And with four bikes in the 2007 Kawasaki motocross range there should be something to suit everyone from novice to pro which is something we all can celebrate.

The two two-strokes in the full-size range – that's the KX125 and KX250 – have only received slight visual changes for next year. New graphics and 'factory' brown hubs and triple clamps are the only 'improvements' made to the green screamers but an all-new lower price tag, the lesser running costs and the inclusion of an open class at the oh-so popular two-smoke-only DEP Challenge series should help a few of these bad boys shift from showroom floors.

With the two-stroke models left feeling miffed at being mostly ignored and undeveloped for '07 the same can't be said for the flagships of the Kawasaki range – the 250F and 450F models.

The KX250F has been the MX2/Lites/125 class bike to beat in '06 with major victories coming from Christophe Pourcel in Europe and Grant Langston and Ryan Villopoto doing a clean sweep in the States. While it's fair to say that the riders' skills played a major part in that success it's arguable that if the '06 KXF hadn't offered such a stable platform to build success on fewer titles would have headed Kawasaki's way.

And rather than just rest on their laurels for 2007, Kawasaki's top techs have been looking at ways to improve their 250F – revisions to the frame, suspension and motor prove they're serious about success.

It's the powerplant that has come in for most of the modification work. Polished intake ports and ultra-light intake valves should help improve intake efficiency while a revised piston and ring also improve power and updated jetting settings and an all-new ignition curve do their bit to make the KXF a ripper!

Down in the gearbox new thicker gears help improve the box's durability and there's also a new shifter drum and revised ratchet to keep shifts silky smooth.

The 450F also gets gearbox mods which make the new bike five-speed rather than the four it was released with in '06.

The valve timing has also been modified to increase low-RPM torque while newly shaped intake ports are claimed to increase throttle response – in theory these mods along with some carb tweaks should make the four-fiddy a ripper!

One of the most noticeable improvements to next year's 450 – besides the bold new graphics – are the diamond-like-carbon (DLC) coated fork tubes that are black in colour. These are possibly the trickiest looking stock forks ever seen on a Japanese manufactured bike.

But as sweet as these bikes seem on paper the proof of any pudding is in the eating so we let little Tony tuck in...

"Out on the track the '07 Kawasaki 250F has all the pulling power you'd need. It has a similar feel to this year's motor but is more responsive and with excellent acceleration.

"The bike has a stronger bottom-end to mid-range pull for faster acceleration from the turns. The mid-to-top-range power doesn't feel too much stronger but the overall spread feels a bit wider than the '06.

"I tried some starts and found second gear worked really well with a smooth drop of the clutch – the power didn't hesitate and it literally just goes and changes gear smoothly with the gas wide open.

"With the track being quite greasy and boggy in places you needed plenty of throttle control to get round fast. The motor helps here by

bike test

It may not have changed a bunch but the 250 two-smoker's a real blast to ride



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Tony Cairoli
MX2 World Championship

being strong and tractable, driving out of the tacky deep muddy turns. This makes for easy riding in these conditions — it just hooks up real easily.

"The jetting was sweet and the bike didn't miss a beat throughout the test.

"The chassis hasn't had loads of changes made to it either but the few changes there are help make the bike loads of fun to ride and it felt really stable on the track. With the track being a bit on the sticky side you had to treat it with some respect.

"The front end on this bike is so stable coming into the turns it felt like I couldn't do a thing wrong. Instead of trying to avoid the ruts in turns I was looking for them and didn't feel the bike wanting to ride out of the top of them leaving the rear wheel being dragged behind.

"The rear shock feels spot on — it works really well with the front forks and it's so balanced on landings and handles like a dream on straights. Coming into the turns I never felt the rear move or kick me about under braking.

"I didn't feel the brakes had any major improvements on the performance but then again I never felt like they've ever needed them either.

"I'm impressed with the 450F. Oddly enough it's the motor that got me the most excited. This motor isn't just fast on the top — it makes power all of the way through the range and there wasn't a single time on any part of the track that I felt I needed more, even in some of the deep tacky turns.

"The track was a bit on the wet side in places and that's where the four-strokes come to their biggest strengths — just letting the motor lay plenty of traction. Admittedly all 450s have plenty of power and torque but the KX still manages to keep this bike more rideable as this is something I do struggle with.

"As strange as this may sound the increase in power actually made the bike easier to ride. The spread of power is awesomely long so you can ride this bike in the lower rpm without affecting the acceleration as and when it is needed.

"Just playing around on tick-over this thing is always ready to light up with the power going straight to the rear wheel with none to waste — pure power to the ground.

"With the '06 running a four-speed box and the Kawasaki factory changing to a five-speed box for '07 I felt that this was a bigger advantage although I only used second, third and fourth gears which pretty much makes it a three-speed box. I never felt like I needed to anything more on the track.

"Again like the 250F the 450's jetting was sweet as a nut — there was nowhere in the power range that needed attention. It was just spot on.

"As far as the suspension goes I was pleased. The front end is very stable. The KX's rear end felt better than on the '06 but it was a bit on the harsh side. It did get a little better at the end of the day with the bike getting more track time. This bike is wicked — it turns well, it's light and it hooks up.

"Moving on to the two-strokes, the 125 — as everybody knows — is a bike which has always been my favourite and the first which I try to throw my leg over for a bit of fun but this was not the case today.

"I put more track time in on the 250 as I got as much fun out of this motor as I would normally get out of a 125. There are certain parts of the track where the four-stroke has a massage advantage but the two-strokes are where my heart lies.

"I think that the KX250 is one of the easiest 250 two-strokes to ride on the market and doesn't deliver silly aggressive power like most — it's just great useable power."



A 450F that Tony feels totally at home on? Yep, you better believe it...



specifications

KX125

Capacity:	124cc
Bore and stroke:	54mm x 54.5mm
Transmission:	Six-speed
Carburettor:	Mikuni TMX38X
Front suspension:	Kayaba 48mm USD (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (310mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1470mm
Seat height:	945mm
Dry weight:	87kg



specifications

KX250

Capacity:	249cc
Bore and stroke:	66.4mm x 72mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin PWK38S
Front suspension:	Kayaba USD (300mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (310mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1480mm
Seat height:	965mm
Dry weight:	97kg



specifications

KX250F

Capacity:	249cc
Bore and stroke:	77mm x 53.6mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin FCR37
Front suspension:	Kayaba USD (315mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (310mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1469mm
Seat height:	955mm
Dry weight:	92.5kg



specifications

KX450F

Capacity:	449cc
Bore and stroke:	96mm x 62.1mm
Transmission:	Five-speed
Carburettor:	Keihin FCR40
Front suspension:	Kayaba USD (315mm travel)
Rear suspension:	Kayaba (315mm travel)
Front brake:	250mm disc
Rear brake:	240mm disc
Wheelbase:	1485mm
Seat height:	965mm
Dry weight:	99.8kg



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Tanky tastes...

Four green meanies gobbled up!

With an awesome track and four flipping great bikes to test out I was salivating like a rabid dog on steroids as I arrived at the fantastic Tonymoto practice facility after a long drive down from t'North.

With minimal changes made to either two-strokes I figured I'd try these first and save the best – that's the four-poppers – until later.

Kawasaki claim the 250 two-stroke is unchanged bar fresh-coloured hubs and clamps and those sweet new graphics. But that has to be bull! For the first time in a few years the two-fiddy doesn't sound like it's gonna detonate itself to bits when you put the motor under any kind of load which is, frankly, very pleasing.

In my opinion the 250 is undergeared and from past experience I've found gearing up the KX really brings the motor alive on a bike that's already very easy and enjoyable to ride without too much modification.

Even though I'm about four stone heavier than your average 125 two-popper pilot I still found the KX125 a whole heap of fun to ride. The motor runs sweet, the suspension is good – although a little soft – and like its bigger brother the 250 it's very enjoyable to be in control of. For anyone planning to do the DEP challenge or someone who wants a woods-weapon that's ideal for enduro or hare scramble usage the KXs would be a great choice.

The 250 four-stroke is also a lot of fun to ride although I'd choose to add an extra tooth to the rear sprocket as I found myself stuck between gears on a regular basis either bouncing off the rev-limiter or labouring the motor. I'm sure it would be fine for most 250F riders though, it's just I'm a wee bit heavier than your average MX2 racer.

The suspension on the 250F is good – even for my weight – and the machine handled impeccably all day. Likewise, brake performance and shifting were flawless as was the general running of the bike.

While the 250F is good the 450F is awesome. The 450F was a new bike in the Kawasaki range for '06 and after spending a small amount of time on one earlier in the year I was not impressed. The '07 however is a much improved bike and Kawasaki have totally changed the way I feel about their 450F.

The motor in this thing is frickin' awesome and there's so much grunt you can keep it up the box and carry plenty of speed around even the tightest of turns. In fact the power is so plentiful it helps what's a big bike feel light, nimble and very manoeuvrable. I felt I could use the power to keep myself out of trouble rather than get myself in it like some manufacturer's 450s seem hell-bent on doing.

The suspension on the '07 feels much more balanced – I felt the zero-sixer sat higher in the rear from stock – and handles well.

To sum up the 450F I'd have to say it doesn't feel like a big Open class bike at all – more like a super-charged 250F. For me at least it's the one bike from the range I truly feel I could pick up from a dealership, slap some numbers on and go race tomorrow.



bike test

Down boy! Suttie pops a woody, sorry, wheelie on the two-fiddy thumper...

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BEACH BUM!

Weston virgin Paul ‘Pondo’ Harris fills us in on what it takes to finish the Weston beach race. Or not...

Words by Paul Harris Photos by still-mx.co.uk

I'D ONLY been to Weston once before (when Travis made his short-lived appearance) and although I thought it was superb entertainment I left with the thought that under no circumstances would I ever be so stupid as to have a go at it myself.

But this summer I was talking to a Weston regular who suggested I should have a crack at it. "What's it like to ride?" I asked. "Well, the build-up and the aftermath are brilliant," he said. "But the actual race is bloody horrible." I mulled it over for maybe five minutes then I made the decision to have a go – it's good to do something stupid from time to time.

There were obstacles though, the first being I was a rubbish rider and my bike – a '98 KX125 – hadn't run without leaking coolant in the last two years no matter what I tried. New gaskets, applying sealant, nothing worked. An ex-Blackfoot Honda tech discovered that two of the studs would need helicoiling as they were

loose in the barrel. With the work done I took my bike to the track and after two years spent sat in the garage she started on the fourth kick.

But within five minutes it was clear that there was still a problem. Even gently revving the bike on the stand showed a fine mist of coolant blowing out the back of the head.

As the deadline for entries drew scarily closer, checks were done to make sure the whole thing wasn't warped. Further experimentation showed that one of the other studs had also come loose so as a precaution they were all done.

Everything was flat and bullet-proof and with a new gasket fitted (and the non-returnable entry fee sent off) I got some track time at the excellent Fro Systems Test Facility. With no leaks after warm up, I took to the track for a session to ride my way through the inevitable arm-pump. For the first time in two years, my KX ran without any coolant running down the

barrel. I could have kissed her – it was on, like Donkey Kong.

But then with a high-pitched screech the poor old girl broke. Whipping the barrel off showed extensive damage – piston scored, ring in pieces, fragments of metal in the cases, a gouge in the barrel. Worst of all, it wasn't obvious what had caused the breakdown in the first place – if we didn't know what had caused it, what would stop it happening again?

The engine was removed and dropped off with John Gaskell at Revs and the problem was identified as the bridge between the exhaust ports being raw of chrome. The barrel was always going to be the kicker, getting the parts and rebuilding was never likely to be a problem but with less than a fortnight left it was impossible to say whether the barrel could be done in time.

Messages were left, begging for it to be done in time for Weston and awesomely they

The quad boys hit the beach at the start of Saturday's race



came up with the goods – John and Nick had the whole motor rebuilt by the Wednesday before the race. All that was left was for the motor to be reinstalled and a lengthy running-in performed but with Technical Inspection on the Friday we were cutting things real tight. Just to add complications things like chain, sprockets and brake pads were yet to be installed – and in some cases, even ordered.

So Wednesday was a late-nighter – the phrase of the day being ‘she has to run tonight’, even a few hours careful running on the stand would take a bit of the panic away. But as the assembly progressed I hit a snag – everything was there except the water pump gasket.

Just as an experiment I tried filling the system without it to see if there was a chance I could run the bike but even with a dead engine the coolant was pouring out at a terrifying rate. As much as I desperately needed to put some hours on the fresh engine she wasn't going to

run on Wednesday. The scarily-tight schedule became tighter still.

Thursday was crunch time. After some dashing about I had a new water pump gasket and had the KX fit to be fired up by early afternoon. She started first kick but there was a nasty knocking noise and water started leaking from an unidentified source. This was getting desperate – the KX was slung straight in the van and raced back to Revs for some expert opinion.

As my nerves frayed the outcome was revealed. The water leak wasn't a problem (I hadn't tightened a hose properly). But what was a problem – a big, big problem – was that the knocking noise turned out to be piston slap. The bore was about a quarter of a millimetre too big. If things weren't in crisis before, they were now.

There were two options – the barrel could be redone while we waited on Friday morning but

with the rebuild and travelling there'd be zero time to run her in – not good. The only other choice was to try and borrow an alternative bike but offers were strangely rare. At the 11th hour, luck turned my way – there was an '02 YZ125 I could borrow for a ridiculously small fee.

With no other options we picked it up. It had done a bit – the tyres were, well, tired but everything else seemed sharp enough on the stand. We had no other choice so it was off to NTG Racing's workshop for as much Weston prep as we could manage. Clock still ticking the prepped-YZ went into the van.

Friday's signing on was a scrum but nothing compared to the queue for transponders. Fortunately, my buddies put my bike through scrutineering while I waited – the YZ sailed through and I found her a spot just behind a row of tape all set for a quick start on Sunday.

The rest was a washout – while everyone else was getting into the Weston spirit I

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KTM

David Knight does the seemingly impossible and beats Stefan Everts in sand



was knackered after the hectic fortnight I'd just had. After chatting to team-tech Mikey Bruford I settled down for a five-minute power nap at about half six. That became 15 hours' kip and I could still have done with a lie-in.

We set off on Saturday to have a giggle at the quads and sidecars – the sight of the dunes brought on some real nerves and I felt I'd need a trials bike to get over them. But the three and four-wheel folk seemed happy to have a crack. If they could do it surely I could too?

But as the clock ticked round on Sunday I had the same old doubts – would the bike hold up? Would I hold up? Would I even be able to get round?

As 12:30 drew closer that whole race-day momentum kicked into gear. Let me tell you nothing, just nothing in motocross that you are

ever likely to do comes close to being as intense as the start of Weston. The queue for parc ferme goes on forever – people are chatting around you and are happy to burn off nervous energy chatting to you too.

Then eventually you get in and the adrenaline goes into overdrive. The Yam was where I'd left her – fuel on, choke on and a first kick start. A quick push to get some space, a friendly 'get out of the ****ing way!' to the chap who parked his Honda across the gangway then it was time to get to the exit.

I found myself sat in a crowd of a thousand running bikes, everyone putting some revs in to try and get some temperature into their bikes. It was awesome – the only way you could tell your bike was still running was through the vibrations coming from it.

The parc ferme was opened and a new crossover sport of UFC and MX began. It was a grapple to get onto the road leading to the track with wet knobbles on the damp surface. As elbows were rubbed and fenders bashed we made our way down onto the track itself – there was no room, the surface was soft and already cutting up, the air was blue with pre-mix and everyone was flat-out wide-open. And the race hadn't even started yet...

In the deep sand the YZ would go where I wanted her to – if I insisted – but otherwise she pretty much picked her own line. It meant I was already getting a sweat on before I'd reached the gate.

From watching previous races it seemed the idea was to hold the pack behind metal fencing until everyone was there, then open the



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gates to release them onto the simple start line dug in the sand, then execute a kinda roughly fair start.

But instead of a long line of riders in front of me once I'd made my way through there was a mass of bikes hurtling away from me. It seemed like the start had already happened so I took a deep breath and let 'er rip down the mile-long start straight.

It was cool, that's the long and the short of it – I ran out of gears real quick, then settled down to a half-throttle cruise in top mindful of the fact I was on a borrowed machine. I had a bit of space – being in the back half of the pack – so there was nothing to do apart from watch out for loons blasting by and sneak the odd glance at the crowd lining the fence.

I had an occasional wobble on with the worn tyres on that flat damp sand but nothing to worry about and it wasn't until I saw the

warning lights for the first turn in the distance that things took a turn for the worse. Without warning the bike went braaaaawwwwp!

The clutch was in before I could think about it and without realising what had happened and straight away the motor stopped dead so it was raise the right hand time and look over my shoulder to see what was coming so I could try to get out of the way. I might have been way down the field but there were still a lot of bikes heading my way. I dropped the clutch just to see if by miracle of miracles the engine freed up but the back wheel just locked. I stopped, knowing what was going to happen next – I gave the kickstart a prod. Locked solid.

That was it, right there, right then, all that time, all that money, the energy spent trying to get the KX going, the last-minute scramble to collect the YZ, all the late-night effort just to get there and it ended within sight of the start.

I could have cried. So I pushed the bike through the gaps in the traffic and caught a lift back to the pits – and that was as close as I got to doing Weston '06.

I watched the rest of the race – Knighter was awesome while Everts looked ruffled and Ando was a role-model for those looking to learn how to beast a bike around a track.

As an event, the Weston Beach Race is second to none – how often does the regular club rider get to take to the same track in anger as Stefan Everts, David Knight, Paul Edmondson, Brad Anderson, Steve Ramon and all? I'll tell you when, at the end of October in Somerset, that's when. At Weston and no where else – there's no event to touch it!

• If you want to read more of Paul's waffle check out his very own weekly blog – named Pondo's Pit Box – at www.dirtbikerider.com

Pondo's Pals!

Our man on the beach says thanks...

I'd like to thank Mark and Fro Systems, Steve and Ade at NTG Racing, Simon for the goggle and glove hook-up, Pat McCann Racing for putting me up in style and providing the immaculate pit that I was unable to reach, John and Nick at Revs for doing as much as was humanly possible to get the KX on the line and Darren for stepping up to the plate at the very last minute. Without all of them I couldn't have got as close to the dream as I did. Mind you, I didn't get that close – but it was a journey just trying...





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Some unknown Weston warrior makes a big splash on lap one

Results - Weston 2006

Solos

1	David Knight	(KTM)	18 laps
2	Stefan Everts	(Rinaldi Yamaha)	17
3	Brad Anderson	(Pioneer Yamaha)	17
4	Steve Ramon	(Suzuki)	17
5	Ashley Greedy	(PAR Honda)	17
6	Arnaud Demeester	(Yamaha)	17
7	Nick Life	(Yamaha)	17
8	Glen Phillips	(ARW Yamaha)	16
9	Jamie Lewis	(PAR Honda)	16
10	Rob Meek	(Lings Honda)	16

Quads

1	John Natalie	(Honda)	19 laps
2	Dana Creech	(Honda)	19
3	Paul Winrow	(Honda)	19

Sidecars

1	Jon/David Sheard	16 laps
2	Andrew Seward/Simon Rogers	15
3	Alan Dow/Paul Hutchman	14

Brad puts a smile across Embo's chops



Da Dawg digs deep

Sutty's Story!

Less prep means more finishing...

If there's one thing I've learnt from reading Paul's tale of woe is that stressing about preparation is for suckers! I was pretty lucky this year that thanks to Gareth Hockey and his crew all I had to do was turn up on Sunday and race.

As it turns out Gareth thought I was coming a little earlier than Sunday morning so there was a little bit of rushed last minute prep work needed on the RHR YZF450 I'd been lent for the event but thanks to top techs Martin Ford and Steve Combstock we were good to go come the start of the race. Well I say start...

For the second year running – heck, it may even be more years than that – the start was bodged with hardly anyone anywhere near the startline before persons unknown decided to take the law into their own hands and simply set off. Wangholes!

Anyhoo, after suffering the second most worst start ever of my lengthy race career and having a first lap to forget I scraped my way up to 86th by the end. It certainly surprised a few people including both Martin and Steve who both secretly predicted that the borrowed bike would never last the distance.

I've gotta say a big thanks to Gareth Hockey for running another awesome event, Martin, Steve, all the race marshals, the PA Promotions peeps, Amy – who not-so-secretly predicted I wouldn't last the distance – plus my ever-faithful liaison officer Lurgatroyd and, last but not least, whoever it was who told me about the Vaseline in t'crack trick. Cheers dudes!

Hurrah! Sutty finally finishes a race





Words and photos by Sully

RAGING BULL!

Mike Alessi gets the job done in Sheffield as Future West supercross hits town

IN THE ever rocky world of British supercross event promotion there's not a great deal you can depend on. But for the past 10 straight years Canadian John Hellam and his team at Future West have brought top-quality indoor motocross action to Sheffield's Hallam FM Arena.

Ever since the night that relaunched UK supercross in 1997 when Larry Ward beat off both Jeremy McGrath and Damon Bradshaw during an epic 20-lap battle the Sheffield show has gone on and on and on. With Ward and Bradshaw both long-retired Hellam planned to bring back McGrath for one last hurrah – a real chance for the King of Supercross to say goodbye to his many British fans. But that plan turned sour when Jeremy brained himself during practice for his very own inaugural Jeremy McGrath Invitational leaving the legend they call Showtime out with a fractured C7 vertebra. ▀



Mike Alessi's just a psychedelic blur as he launches the 250F Toomer out the gate

Bradshaw by name, Bradshaw by nature! Nev lives up to namesake Damon by elbowing Billy Mac off the track to get third in the Lites



David Vuillemin is hardly a surprise Open class winner



The gate drops on the Amateur Main



Undeterred by Jeremy's problems, Hellam pulls Plan B out of the Future West ilofax and fetches over US stars Mike Alessi, David Vuillemin and Jason Thomas as well as throttle-crazy Canuck Colton Facciotti to go head-to-head with a handful of British-based stars who are racing indoors for the first time in something like 11 months!

The Pro Lites class is never gonna be anything but an Alessi benefit and as you'd expect from the ultra-committed racing machine, Mikey's come to Sheffield to dominate. Things are so serious in the Alessi camp they've gone so far as dragging a KTM factory tech all the way from Austria with a race-bike for Mike.

And heat one sees the tech's journey from Mattighofen isn't wasted as Mike yanks the holey then never looks back. But if Alessi did take a moment to look behind he'd find Facciotti running a distant second while third place man Alex Snow on the Relentless Suzuki is close to being lapped by the orange #800 machine as the chequered flag's unfurled.

Heat two's a chance for the locals to shine as Motovision Suzuki's Neville Bradshaw takes

AM DRAM!

The guys who pay to play!

sheffield sx

It's not just the pros who take to the line in Sheffield as almost 300 amateur and youth riders (see Rage for youth report and pictures) head to the Hallam FM Arena.

Fast Frenchman Vincent Cossard takes his Honda to a fine win in the Lites class as Essex FMXer Joe Stevens takes second and Gavin M Foulston grabs third in their 12-lap Main.

The Open class sees Charlie Hollis and his Honda takes control from the off as freestyling ironman Stevens battles his way through the pack to second ahead of local veteran Danny Blakely who steers his Silvester Yamaha to third.

Results

Amateur Lites

1 Vincent Cossard, 2 Joe Stevens, 3 Gavin M Foulston,
4 Mark Atkinson, 5 Martin Downer, 6 Michael Deeley

Amateur Open

1 Charlie Hollis, 2 Joe Stevens, 3 Danny Blakely,
4 Craig Chamberlain, 5 Joe Pyke, 6 Martin Downer

the 2K7 RMZ-250 to its first UK win ahead of 15-year-old Welsh lad Ashley Greedy and California-based Brit Brad Turner.

The semi-final sees Billy Mac bounce back from his heat two crash to seal a solid victory and his place in the final on the Bike-It Dixon Yamaha while Pioneer Yamaha's Brad Anderson, Kawasaki-mounted youngster Lewis King and Yorkshireman Carl Brogden also book their place in the main.

The National Motocross Academy's head coach Danny Tollet proves he practices what he preaches by winning the LCQ on his two-stroke KTM ahead of Brogden who's blissfully unaware he's already transferred to the Main thanks to his fourth place in the semi.

The Lites Main Event provides some of the best racing of the night – once you look past the two transatlantic travellers that is. As the gate drops Mikey pins it, grabs the holeshot and checks out. "It's kind of my specialty," claims Mikey. "I get the holeshot and just keep it going from there."

With Alessi doing his thing and Facciotti in a solid second the real action is further back down the pack. MacKenzie's third but

Charlie Hollis wins the Amateur class and makes the Pro Open final as well



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NO FEAR

Bradshaw's reeling him in by tripling in places Billy cannot. With the gap closed and Billy firmly in Nev's sights things come to a head – that's Bradshaw's elbow to MacKenzie's head.

"I made a bunch of time on him in the back rhythm section and came into the corner way faster. I just kinda ran out of room," reckons Bradshaw about the move that would've made namesake Damon oh-so proud.

By the time Billy realises what's hit him and found his way back on track Bradshaw's collected the third place trophy, sprayed some champagne at winner Alessi and runner-up Facciotti then gone to get himself ready for the Open class Main.

In relation to the Lites main, the Open Pro heats are mildly exciting at best. Franco-Yanko David Vuillemin wins the opener after tangling with a lapper on the second to last lap. While David gets his borrowed Honda going again in first, Facciotti steals the lead with a little bump n' run manoeuvre in the next corner but Le Cobra takes Colton right back in the back-straight rhythm section. MacKenzie finishes third and LPE Kawasaki's woodsman

Results - Sheffield SX

Pro Lites

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Mike Alessi | (Red Bull KTM) |
| 2 Colton Facciotti | (Kawasaki) |
| 3 Neville Bradshaw | (Motovision Suzuki) |
| 4 Billy MacKenzie | (Bike-It Dixon Yamaha) |
| 5 Ashley Greedy | (PAR Honda) |
| 6 Brad Anderson | (Pioneer Yamaha) |

Pro Open

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1 David Vuillemin | (Honda) |
| 2 Jason Thomas | (Honda) |
| 3 Gordon Crockard | (Wulfsport Honda) |
| 4 Neville Bradshaw | (Motovision Suzuki) |
| 5 Billy MacKenzie | (Bike-It Dixon Yamaha) |
| 6 Brad Anderson | (Pioneer Yamaha) |

Billy Mac has a torrid time in Sheffield

sheffield sx

Lewis King

Mike Alessi

Colton Facciotti

Jason Thomas

Gordon Crockard is first Brit home in the Open Main

Ryan Voase makes the Open final

Jason Thomas takes second behind Vuillemin

Le Cobra strikes at Sheffield Arena

Ryan Voase takes the final transfer spot in a system that's confusingly different from that of the Lites'.

In heat two Jason Thomas, Bradshaw, Crockard and Brad Anderson all qualify directly to the Main.

Alex Snow who misses out on a direct transfer by one place in heat one wins the semi while PAR Honda's new boy Chad Yarranton edges out Scottish-born AMA-pro Chris Hay for the final transfer spot.

In the LCQ Silvester Yamaha's Carl Brogden makes his second Main of the night while Amateur champ Charlie Hollis earns the last of the 12 gates for the final by finishing a close second.

And as the gate drops for the Pro Open Main Event it's Jason Thomas who gets around turn one first but Le Cobra slithers by in the opening whoop section and takes the lead while Crockard blitzes through the pack to take

third in the same section.

There's carnage in turn one as Brogden, MacKenzie and Bradshaw all tangle and go down leaving the three 250F-mounted riders with a whole heap of work to do if they're gonna work their way back through the pack of 250 two-strokes and four-fifty four-poppers in the 15-lap race.

There's no stopping Vuillemin out front as the Frenchman takes to the Dirt Wurx-built 26-second lap like a speedy slug to lettuce. Thomas is equally settled in second with Crockard a safe third as the Bradshaw/MacKenzie freight train can't get close enough to put the Ulsterman under any serious amount of pressure.

And that's how it stays right to the very end. Vuillemin wins it and even finds time to goon his way around the last lap, Thomas stays second and Crockard – who's best of the Brits – cheerfully accepts third!



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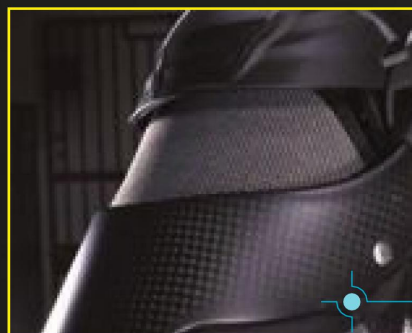
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After 12 years away Dougie returns to the Scott – and the top step of the podium

GREAT SCOTT!

The world's greatest trials rider wins the world's greatest one-day trial in what most Yorkshiremen would say is the world's greatest county...

Words by g2f.co.uk Photos by Eric Kitchen

THE SCOTT time and observation trial organised by the Richmond Motor Club remains as the toughest one-day trial in the world. Unlike a normal trial, time really matters in this event with the eventual winner being decided by a combination of time penalties and marks lost in the sections. The course follows a similar route each year, consisting of 80 or so miles all on rough going – and we mean rough – with the added challenge of 70-plus sections.

The rider who completes the epic journey around the course at the quickest pace sets what is known as standard time. The other riders are then awarded one mark for each minute or part thereof of that they run over this benchmark. These marks are then added to those marks that are collected in the hazards

which are observed using traditional no-stop rules. The rider with the lowest combined total is the winner.

This event is not for the faint-hearted or weak-minded as the strain on body and brain is among the most demanding test found on two wheels. Riders do not stop to inspect the sections on foot but instead pause momentarily at the start of each hazard to catch their breath and to get a brief overview of the challenge that lies ahead.

With no time to wait for your fellow competitors or fallen riders it's a familiar sight to have several riders in the section at the same time. The result of impatience and absolute fatigue is often pure carnage.

After an absence of 12 years Dougie Lampkin returns to the Scott and takes the winner's trophy to add to the



Wayne Braybrook switches to Gas Gas and claims second overall



scott trial

Repsol Beta-mounted Ian Austermuhle comes home fifth overall



Spanish visitor Amos Bilbao fares better this year after a change in tactics



After going head-to-head with Dougie, Grimbo misses a section and is excluded

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other he collected back in 1994. Dougie's winning statistics are 4:56:49 with 33 marks lost on observation. Lampkin's victory puts a halt to Graham Jarvis' recent run of wins and prevents him taking the outright record of most Scott victories.

The Sherco rider currently shares that position with the great Sammy Miller – both southerners having won seven each. The 2006 Scott is one that Jarvis will want to forget as he's excluded for missing section 58.

Lampkin survives an early puncture and is obviously delighted with his win but pays respect to both the event and his close rival. "It's every bit as tough as I remembered it but having won all the effort and the pressure I put myself under seems very worthwhile. I really feel for Graham as we were having a great battle but unfortunately missing a section is always something that can happen in the Scott.

"I've really enjoyed my day but it might be a few years before I return again. Being the best

on observation and setting the fastest time was a real bonus and was a nice way to win. It was good to ride in the UK again and I would like to finish off by thanking everyone who has cheered me on today and by also thanking the Richmond Motor Club for putting on such a brilliant event."

Showing little emotion Jarvis reflects on his mistake. "I had no idea that I had missed the section until Dougie came and told me at the finish. At first I thought he must



KEVIN WINDHAM

Culley Photo

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NOFEAR





Typical Scott chaos as Matt Tiplady hangs a U-turn in front of Kevin Seward and Phillip Waite

Results 2006 Scott Trial

		marks	time	total
1	Dougie Lampkin (Montesa)	33	0	33
2	Wayne Braybrook (Gas Gas)	35	6	41
3	James Dabill (Beta)	38	12	50
4	Ben Hemingway (Beta)	61	4	65
5	Ian Austermuhle (Beta)	57	14	71
6	Amos Bilbao (Montesa)	38	40	78

have got it wrong but once he explained where I had gone wrong I knew he was right. I'm absolutely gutted, after all that effort it feels so empty especially as I think it would have been close between us."

With Jarvis out of the running veteran Scott campaigner and previous winner Wayne Braybrook takes the runner-up spot eight marks behind Lampkin. Better known as an enduro rider these days, the ex British championship trials contender is perhaps a surprise contender having only made the switch from Montesa to Gas Gas a few weeks prior to the event.

With Shaun Morris not competing and Steve Colley on overseas duties in Mexico, Braybrook is the main runner for Gas Gas and is shadowed the whole day by British importer John Shirt to ensure that the Spanish marque is well represented in the final results. Their efforts are duly rewarded.

Young Yorkshireman James Dabill completes the top three. The 20-year-old Beta rider achieves by far his best result in only his fourth outing at this unique event where experience and course knowledge counts for so much. Dabill's day is pretty much without incident but the youngster is slightly shocked that he's so far behind his elders in terms of time. "I thought I would have been nearer to Dougie and Wayne on time as I was really pushing hard especially

on the final part. It just shows that those guys have still got it when it comes to this event."

Dabill's Beta team-mates Ben Hemingway and Ian Austermuhle take fourth and fifth places respectively with only six marks separating the duo after having battled for over five hours. Hemingway has carried a GPS device in his rucksack along with an assortment of essential tools and spares. The downloaded post event data confirms that he has travelled 81 miles to complete the 76 sections with his heart rate reaching an incredible 193BPM as various points during his adventure.

Popular Spanish rider Amos Bilbao finishes a steady sixth position. Having suffered badly last year Amos adopts a different technique after having learnt the hard way. "This time I decided to concentrate on the sections and my score has been much better. Last year I went too fast too early and I was then finished by the fourth fuel check with still a lot of the trial to ride."

While Lampkin may have reinstated himself as King of the Dales the final word must go to local lass Katy Sunter who's family have a rich history associated with this event. After several attempts Katy finally achieves her dream of finishing within the permitted time – she clocks off with just four short minutes to spare. Well done that girl!

Katy Sunter finally makes it to a Scott finish within the allowed time





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MEN OF STEEL!

RAGE HEADS TO SHEFFIELD TO CATCH UP WITH THE SUPERCROSS SUPERMEN!

A massive entry of youth racers head to Sheffield's Hallam FM Arena for the 2006 Future West supercross. With hundreds of riders booked in and only 12 spaces available for the final in each of the classes there are a shedload of qualifying heats and LCQs to get through before the evening event starts.

With 8,000 fans sat in their seats and the awesome Dirt Wurx constructed course looking pristine, the action comes thick and fast after the opening ceremonies are done and dusted.

Josh Coleman sets the pace in the Autos final, leading right from the start until Joe Jefferies snatches victory on the line. It's so close no-one's quite sure who's won it until the lap-scorers give the nod to Joe. Connor Hughes fill the final podium spot after putting in a good solid ride.

In the 65s Daniel Clark takes the win after beating back Michael Eccles and Tom Neal while local lad Christian Taylor takes the SW85 win ahead of Jamie Rayner and Jake Page.

Max Anstie's on fire in the big-wheel 85s and the Team Green rider is so dominant he'd probably have lapped the entire field given a

few more laps. Turbo Taylor adds big-wheel silver to his small-wheel gold while Jake Page also does the double to take his second third placed prize of the night.

Making his youth debut for the PAR Honda squad, Ashley Greedy makes light work of the Youth Lites Main Event, leading from start to finish. Lewis King takes second on the Bagnall's Kawasaki ahead of Edward Allingham who also runs well in both adult amateur classes.

With the Future West event being the first and last indoor SX event for all youth classes in 2006 all eyes are now focussed on the BOSX championship that's planned to start at the end of November near Kings Lynn.



Max Anstie's on fire in the BW85s at Sheffield

Results

Auto

1 Joe Jefferies, 2 Josh Coleman, 3 Connor Hughes, 4 George Turner, 5 Ollie Evans, 6 Jay Hague

65cc

1 Daniel Clark, 2 Michael Eccles, 3 Tom Neal, 4 Max Acres, 5 Cal Cooper, 6 Charlie Lambeth

85cc SW

1 Christian Taylor, 2 Jamie Rayner, 3 Jake Page, 4 Luke Dean, 5 Luke Norris, 6 Craig Maddock

85cc BW

1 Max Anstie, 2 Christian Taylor, 3 Jake Page, 4 Tom Bennett, 5 George Baldwin, 6 Jake Millward

Youth Lites

1 Ashley Greedy, 2 Lewis King, 3 Edward Allingham, 4 Gavin M Foulston, 5 Jordan Booker, 6 Vincent Cossard

Ashley Greedy's in awesome form on his PAR Homes Honda debut





Christian Taylor goes 1-2 in the SW and BW85cc classes



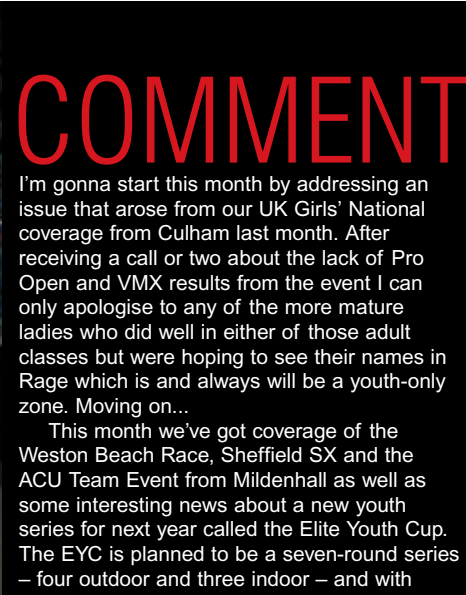
Auto ace Connor Hughes takes third overall



Daniel Clarke wins the 65cc Main Event



Sam Barney gets a move on



George Turner just misses an Auto podium

COMMENT

I'm gonna start this month by addressing an issue that arose from our UK Girls' National coverage from Culham last month. After receiving a call or two about the lack of Pro Open and VMX results from the event I can only apologise to any of the more mature ladies who did well in either of those adult classes but were hoping to see their names in Rage which is and always will be a youth-only zone. Moving on...

This month we've got coverage of the Weston Beach Race, Sheffield SX and the ACU Team Event from Mildenhall as well as some interesting news about a new youth series for next year called the Elite Youth Cup. The EYC is planned to be a seven-round series – four outdoor and three indoor – and with Events 22's Matt Bates at the helm it should be awesome.

Of course it also means that there are now four major youth championships in the UK – that's the BYMX, BSMA, British Masters and the EYC. All I can say is next year's gonna be busy, it should also be a very exciting year for youth motocross.

We get a lot of emails asking 'can I be in MX Top Trumps'. Well the answer is usually yes – if you're a youth rider. All we need is a high-quality copyright free image and the usual MX Top Trumps information. Email it all to rage@dirtbikerider.co.uk and we'll get you in as soon as there's a space.

And if you've got any news or gossip you'd like to share with us email it to the same address and we can spread the word. Until next month keep it rubber side down.

SUPERSERIES!

If there's one seven-round series you need to be a part of in 2007 it's the Elite Youth Cup – a championship brought to you by Events 22's Matt Bates and DEP's Craig Elwell who's already been heavily involved in the 125cc two-smoke-only DEP Challenge for grown-ups.

The Elite Youth Cup is an all-new championship with a twist. Instead of being a fully outdoor or totally indoor series the EYC takes in a bit of both meaning you've gotta be ace at it all to wrap up this title.

The series kicks off at the end of April at a currently top-secret GP venue before heading to Fittingly in June, Landrake in July and Culham in September before going indoors for the winter months.

Riders wishing to enter the series are advised to register online now at www.eliteyouthcup.co.uk where more information and regular updates – including all venues – can be found. Stay tuned to Rage for more information next month!

Book your place in the Elite Youth Cup



GINGERSNAPS!

PAR Honda's Mel Pocock came a bit of a cropper at a training camp in Holland recently and ended up breaking and dislocating his collarbone. The good news is it's not too serious an injury and he should be back on track by the time you're reading this!

DVDDELIGHT!

If there's one movie you need to be buying (or pestering your parents to buy) this winter it's the all-new epic by GSP Video – The Next Generation. The DVD features all the hottest youth motocross riders such as Ash Greedy, Steven Clarke, Sam Davis, Luke Hawkins and more doing what they do best – tearing it up like there's no tomorrow.

There's plenty of footage from the races and from more than a handful of riders' top secret practice tracks as well as tons of bonus footage. The DVD's producer – Gary Price – reckons it'll be on sale just in time for the Dirt Bike Show at Stoneleigh for just less than £22. Check out www.tngmx.com for more info and a trailer of this great film.

PRICECRASH!

Registration fees for the eight-round 2007 BYMX youth motocross championships have come down in price to £330. What most parents plan to do with the 20 pounds saved remains to be seen... Maybe they could buy a copy of The Next Generation DVD?

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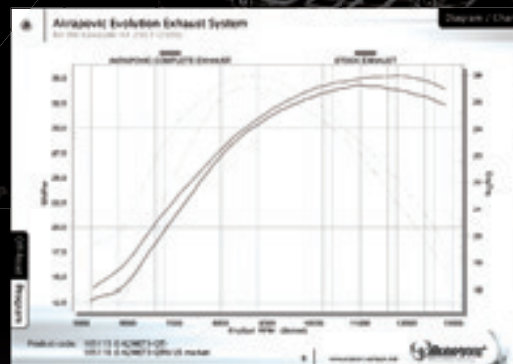
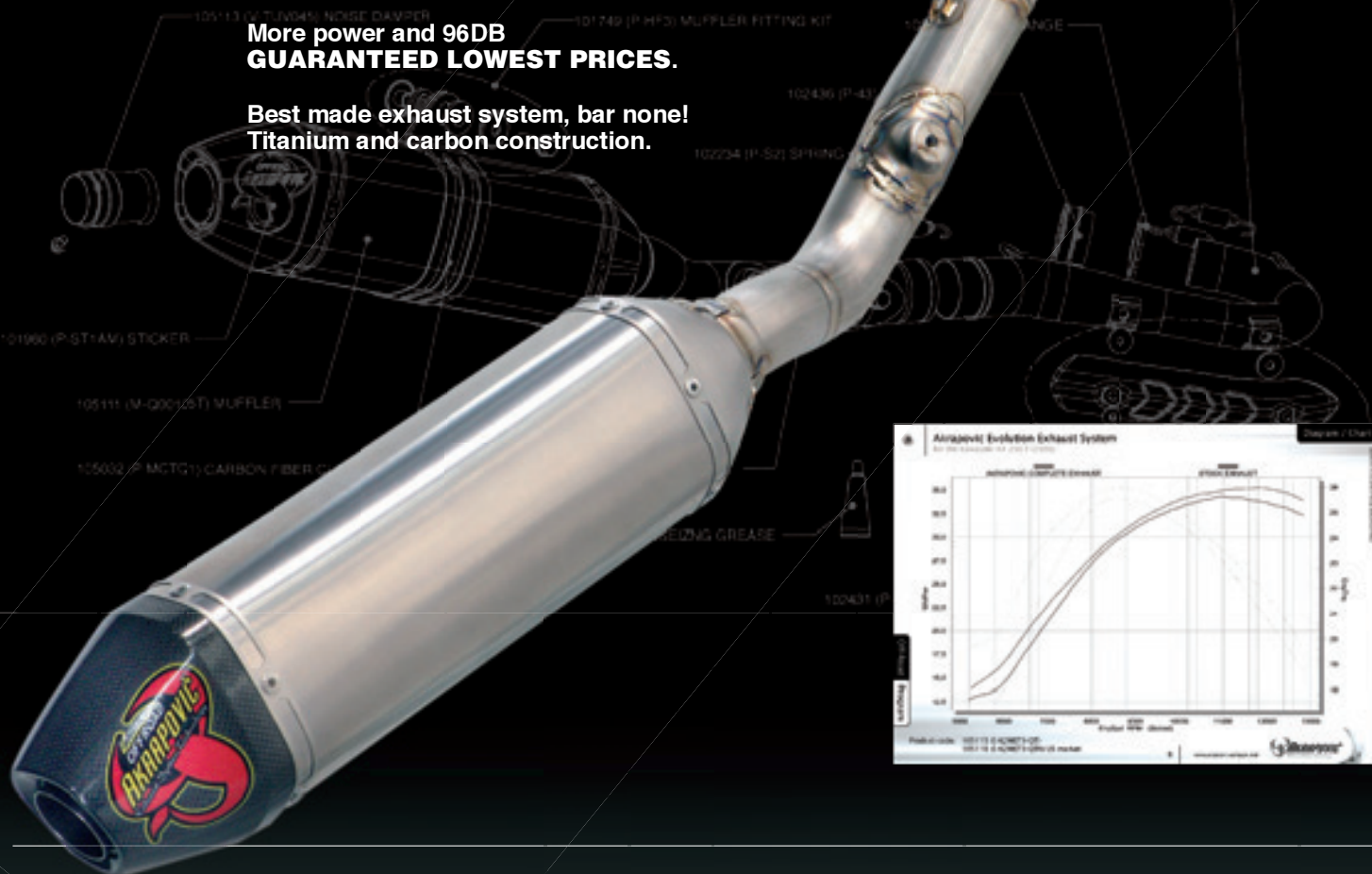


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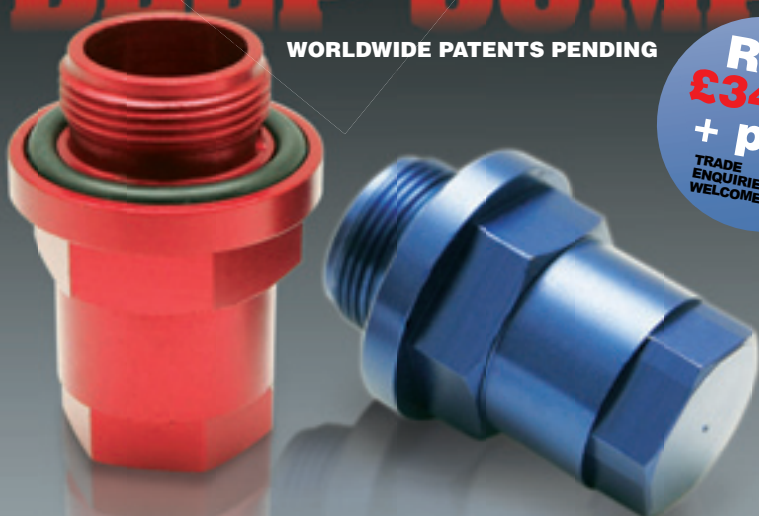
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TEAMSPIRIT!

IT'S A CLASH OF THE CLUBS AT THE BYMX TEAM EVENT IN MILDENHALL

13 teams from right around the country converge on Mildenhall in sunny Suffolk for the annual BYMX team event where current champions Matchams MX World take the title yet again with the Cumbrian crew coming a creditable second.

Rather than drone on about who did what and which ringers were riding for which teams we figured it's better to let the pictures do the talking so here's a selection from ace-snapper Ray Smith. To see more of Ray's work check out his website – www.actionsport.co.uk.

Results

2006 BYMX Team Event

1 Matchams 907 points, 2 Cumbria 1078, 3 BSMA 1253, 4 Northampton 1611, 5 Red Dragons 2 1729, 6 Northern Ireland 1890, 7 Isle of Man 2111, 8 Cheshire NW 2120, 9 Norwich and District 2745, 10 Red Dragons 1 2758, 11 GEST Hastings 1 3210, 12 Southern Ireland 3287, 13 GEST Hastings 2 3490.



Team Cumbria, eh!



Team BSMA okay!



The Red Dragons





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DUNERAIDERS!

YOUTH ACES BATTLE IT OUT AT THE WESTON BEACH RACE BONANZA

Photos by still-mx.co.uk

Almost 220 youth racers took to the beach at Weston-Super-Mare recently for the 2006 edition of the Weston Beach Race. A shortened course was used for both the 65 and 85cc races which were keenly fought out for the full 60-minute duration with the class wins eventually going to Ben Watson, Dan Thornhill and Jack Rowland.

Results - Weston 2006

65cc

1 Ben Watson 10 laps, 2 Callan Cooper, 3 Daniel Clarke, 4 Corie Southwood 9 laps, 5 James Harrison, 6 Luke Cockburn, 7 Danny Blair, 8 Liam Garland, 9 Ricky Roderick, 10 Todd Kellett

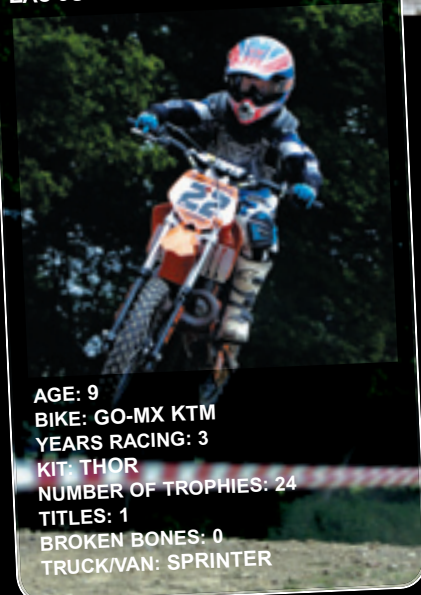
SW85cc

1 Dan Thornhill 14 laps, 2 Ryan Staveley 13 laps, 3 Steve Holcombe 12 laps, 4 Paul Coates, 5 Leighton Holmes, 6 Luke Coker, 7 Ryan Thomas 11 laps, 8 Nathan Watson, 9 Harry Bradley, 10 Cody Ling

BW85cc

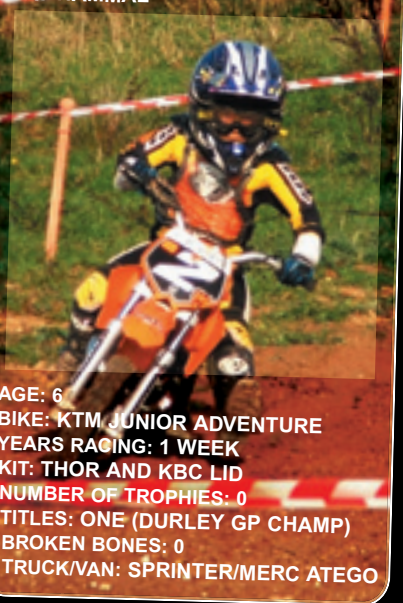
1 Jack Rowland 15 laps, 2 Matthew Moffat, 3 Frazer Norrie 14 laps, 4 Matt Burrows, 5 Joe Jones, 6 Lloyd Morgan, 7 David Sweet, 8 David Pearce, 9 Jake Millward, 10 Tom Hiron

ZAC JUDD



AGE: 9
BIKE: GO-MX KTM
YEARS RACING: 3
KIT: THOR
NUMBER OF TROPHIES: 24
TITLES: 1
BROKEN BONES: 0
TRUCK/VAN: SPRINTER

TAY HAMMAL



AGE: 6
BIKE: KTM JUNIOR ADVENTURE
YEARS RACING: 1 WEEK
KIT: THOR AND KBC LID
NUMBER OF TROPHIES: 0
TITLES: ONE (DURLEY GP CHAMP)
BROKEN BONES: 0
TRUCK/VAN: SPRINTER/MERC ATEGO

FOND FAREWELL!

BILLY'S SAID TO SAY GOODBYE TO THE SOUTH BUT HE'S GOT PLENTY OF GOOD STUFF COMING UP TO KEEP HIS MIND OCCUPIED...



HELLO FELLOW DBR readers. I have just sat myself down behind big bossman Stevie D's desk after Ben fetched me from the airport following my recent visit to the Bilbao Supercross. It was a pretty last-minute decision to go – the promoter literally gave me two days to make up my mind and get a bike sorted! I wasn't doing anything anyway so I packed my bags and went for a little supercross adventure...

I've had two supercross adventures now, the first being Sheffield last week which went pretty well as it's the first SX I've done in a while. I don't consider myself as such a supercross rider but I guess that's only because we never do them in Britain! So it was nice to get out and blow some cobwebs off! I really enjoy the close racing too – it's a proper buzz!

So anyways, a fourth and a fifth at Sheffield and a seventh in Spain. Sure they ain't the best results but it has been a total blast. I had some little crashes in every race so I'm sure I coulda been in the top three if I had prepared myself and the bike a bit better.

wicked on! So we went up there for a couple of days and rode our little hearts out, trying whip after whip to see who could get it most inverted! And supermoto style big oval drifts in fourth gear on a 450 on the beach! Sends shivers down my spine! We made a little video too and put it on youtube so go check it out if you can – my user name is billymac211 so just search for that!

Apart from the riding side I've managed to get out a few times, the best being when I went down to see Jonesy for a night out! Man the Welsh are wild, especially Mark's cousin John! I've met him a few times when I've been with Mark and he always pushes the boat out if you know what I mean! What started as a pretty s****y Wednesday night out in Bridgend he made into a complete comedy show! The more we drank the wilder it got – there was just story after story, prank after prank. My sides were hurting from laughing so much!

Mark went to the toilet only to return with a toilet cube in his hand and put it in John's pint! John didn't care though and was happily swigging away so



It's been pretty emotional too this month. I moved all my stuff out the house I've been staying in with the other lads and said my goodbyes to the team and everyone down south – time to move home and start preparing for next season. I'm really looking forward to getting home too. I have some really good months training when I'm home, out in the rain with the really sharp cold air when you cycle – it's proper! Good cycle routes up in the countryside and running down the beach plus there is always someone around to go play footy or squash with, then when the snow comes it's always a good laugh hammering your car around in the big car parks after dark!

Winter in Edinburgh is gorgeous too. The whole city is lit up with all the funfairs and the ice rink in the gardens – so many people flock to Edinburgh no matter what the season and the Hogmanay celebrations are some of the best in the world!

The only riding I have done apart from the supercrosses has been at a secret beach in the north of Scotland. I call it my happy place! Miles and miles of grassy dunes and flat wet sand to get

Jonesy had a sip too – in the end they both downed it and at the bottom of the pint was the used toilet cube! The thing that I will remember the most from that night is Mark coughing up a little bit of sick into a pint glass and John grabbing it off him and... [censored – SL] ...I have the video – I might put that on youtube too! I'll okay it with him first though! Might be too graphic for some of you readers!

So then, not long now until I'll be stepping on the green machine – one more race for Bike-It Dixon Yamaha and I'll be setting sail for new horizons and things are going to be greener on the other side! Oh ha ha ha, I'm so funny aren't I! Get it? Green, blue! Okay, whatever...

Thanks to everyone again for this year, I can't really say it enough where these boys are concerned. Steve Dixon, Ben my mechanic for the past two years, before that Mikey. The whole team have been brilliant and I'm sad to leave it all behind.

See you at Belfast...

Billy Mac 211

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